

Rising Intensity of Competition and Conflict

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Gen. Herbert J. "Hawk" Carlisle, USAF (Ret.):

Well, good afternoon everyone. It's great to be here. I appreciate everybody being part of this. And let me start by thanking Orville. Orville, you've been outstanding. I think all of us, whether in uniform or out, post-uniform, you've been truly a leader of leaders and we can't tell you how much we appreciate everything you've done.

I am honored to be here. I had the great good fortune to spend 39 years in our Air Force. Last job was Air Combat Command and Pacific Air Forces before that. So let me introduce the incredible crowd we have on the stage with me today. I have to say these four gentlemen are great friends, great Patriots, great Americans, and a great part of our United States Air Force. I asked him earlier if I could use call signs. So we may go back and forth between call signs and real names. But, General Mark Grace Kelly, Commander of Air Combat Command. General Mike Minnie Minihan, the Commander of Air Mobility Command. And General Jim Scorch Hecker, the Commander of U.S. Forces in Europe, Air Forces Africa and NATO Air Command. And General Keith, no, it's Kevin, right? Kevin, there you go. Inside Joke. General Kevin Gumby Schneider, Commander of Pacific Air Forces.

I'm going to take just a moment out of our time and it's to congratulate General Kelly. I have to say, a little bit of an extended tour at Air Combat Command for reasons I think we're all aware of. But Grace, I got to say, first of all, you fixed everything that I messed up. And more importantly, you have a lot to be proud of, incredible command tour. And this nation owes you a debt of gratitude, thanks for your service and prayer.

He's been living in Dodd Hall for nine months if that tells you anything.

So folks, this is a great opportunity to talk about the world we live in today. And I think the rising competition and conflict within the globe is something that we as a nation have not seen, certainly in my lifetime as far as I can remember, at this level. I mean, if you just do once around the world, if you think about what is happening in the INDOPACOM Theater from China, the entire circumference from the Senkakus with Japan, Taiwan Straits, the 10 dash line now and the South China Sea, with the Philippines, with Vietnam, with the border disputes with India. And again, I think all you have to do is listen to what President Xi Jinping says in all of his remarks, the reunification of China and Taiwan, Wolf diplomacy Belt and Road, the conflict or the competition, thank God it's not conflict yet, but the competition in PACOM Theater is as high as certainly I can remember in my time. So incredible challenge there.

We all know what's going on after the horrible Hamas attacks in Israel, the Iranian proxies of Hezbollah, what's happening with the Houthis in the shipping lanes in the Red Sea and the challenges and the fact in 150 attacks on American forces within the Middle East and that rising challenge in that part of the world.

And then of course, with what General Hecker deals with every day. And that is almost our starting our third year war in the Ukraine, the unjust war of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The challenges face the eastern flank of NATO and where that's going from there, as well as when you think about it, we don't even talk about the challenges that SOUTHCOM faces and the challenges with the drug cartels to the South, with the infiltration of China throughout the world in trying to gain again, the ability to displace the world order, the international order, the rule of law. And replace the United States both economically and militarily.

So I think this discussion with these four gentlemen that deal with these threats every single day is a great discussion to have and things that this nation needs to do in the interest of our national security. And more importantly, I think, and I think about this every day, and I think everybody on this stage does, is what does it mean to our children and our children's children? Because that's what this is about. This is the legacy of our country and where we're going and what we're going to need to do to maintain the sovereignty, the democracy, the liberal world that we live in the United States.

So with that, I'll start with a question for all four of you, and it's pretty general, but it'll give you a chance to tell us where you sit. And that is, what keeps you up at night, and what can industry do, writ large, to help you solve your challenges? So General Kelly?

Gen. Mark D. Kelly:

Sir. Well, thanks sir. As far as what keeps me up at night, it's those key parts and tasks, the ACCOs, the Air Force, the Joint Force and the nation. And so first amongst equals is the Air Superiority Enterprise. And so our joint force is organized, trained, equipped to operate with Air Superiority. It's not remotely designed to operate without it. And so what keeps me up at night is advocating successfully for the platforms, the sensors, the weapons, the flying hours, the skill level across that enterprise because for the first time in decades we're going to end up fighting for this and it's going to be a cage match. And so it's not something we can afford to lose, like you said, our sons and daughters and grandsons and granddaughters, we don't want them fighting for this. I'd say the other one that keeps me up at night is part and parcel to that is it's hard to dominate in a domain if you don't have an awareness in that domain. And so, we have to have air domain awareness. And so, a lot of time, energy advocating to keep our great E3 operating and E7 get as fast as we can out there.

And then really close heels to that, I'd say what keeps me up at night is being able to advocate successfully. And it's hard, because it's not an easy topic, is being able to operate and succeed and dominate across the electromagnetic spectrum. If you want to dominate in the fight, you better dominate in the EMS and that's from single hertz to kilohertz, megahertz, gigahertz, all the way up to UV and IR. And that's a very hard thing to advocate in close spaces up on the hill or within DOD. And so that's part of it.

And then I'd say closer to home is just today's readiness. Years ago, former Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld was given an answer to a question and the answer he gave included the quote, "You go to war with the military, you have not the military you want or wish you had." He was somewhat criticized for his answer, but what got lost in the noise level was the fact that he was 100% right. And so, if we get into a fight that bubbles past competition to conflict or war, six weeks, six months, six years, whatever the timeline may be, we'll go to war with the military we have, not the one we want or wish we had. That includes the Airmen, the airframes, the platforms, the sensors, the readiness, the national will, the national unity of effort, et cetera, et cetera. And so, keeping that forefront frankly is what keeps me up most days and nights.

Gen. Herbert J. "Hawk" Carlisle, USAF (Ret.):

Thank you very much. Yeah, well-spoken, I think. And when you talk about Air Superiority, I think sometimes we still to this day as a nation considered a God-given right. And it's one you have to fight for every single day. So General Minihan.

Gen. Mike Minihan:

Sir, I sleep very good at night. But there are some nights that I sleep with a little less hours than needed. I'll say this, it's not lost on Air Mobility Command that we are the most relied upon force in the history of warfare. And so I don't say that from a position of arrogance. I don't say that seeking sympathy for the mission set that we have, but the reality is everybody else's success is dependent on us being able to put them in position to be successful. So an example would be across the joint force, ACE is something I'm doing, and also something I'm supporting for the Air Force, but I also have a calling that has to address the joint force. So whether it's EABO for the Marines, DMO for the Navy, MDTF for the Army, I've got to be able to be successful in all of those arenas.

I also have to serve multiple combatant commands. So it would be easy to focus in one AOR and to serve just PACAF and PACOM. But the reality is I've got a mission set I need to cover down with Homeland Defense and NORTHCOM. I've got STRATCOM equities that need to be serviced, and there's other combatant commands that need the full weight of effort from Air Mobility command. So we realize that we are going to be relied upon and we take that very seriously.

Second thing that challenges my sleep is connectivity. We are operating still the second tanker this nation has ever built, okay? And essentially has the same comm setup that it had when it rolled out in the '50s. If we don't get connectivity correct, then we are condemned to operate that airplane in the same fashion that our grandfathers did in the '50s, '60s and '70s.

So this connectivity piece is not just about situational awareness for the mobility crews. This is about joining the DAF Battle Network. This is about supporting everybody else that I mentioned in the previous part of my answer here. But more importantly, this is about the success of the joint force. So if I can join the network, I can use it to be successful, but I can also give it away just like I give away gas in the air, give away situation awareness, give away connectivity, give away that battle space awareness. And that battle network, that DAF Battle Network is absolutely something that I feel our mobility fleet needs to catch up on.

The last thing I'll talk about just in terms of the challenge to sleep would be the discipline aspect of it. So there's a discipline, there's an operational discipline that we need to exhibit each and every day that gets after being able to do what we say we can do, okay?

So this is about fundamentals, blocking and tackling. If we need to explode into theater, we need to really be able to do that. And everything that comes along with it, the port, the maintenance, the fuel, the fly fix support, how all that comes together to make us explode into theater. But another aspect of discipline is actually making the decision to not be distracted on the main task. I thought the SECAF yesterday and certainly the chief and others really hit it home on the imperative to get focused on this. So specifically with the mobility team, can I come off of support for the Ukraine, do what I need to do and then come back to great power competition? Can I come down and do support for the Middle East and then come back up to great power competition? So it's the decision to be disciplined and how we're spending our time and not take our side off of what the true challenge is out there.

Last thing I'll say, because you did ask about industry, sir. We often say industry and the government, but we need to look at industry as a relationship. So if there's frustrations on either side, that's a comment, not on one side or the other, that's the comment on the relationship. So what I'm grateful for is industry partners and the communication that I think is very strong from both sides. When one side's disappointed that we trust each other enough to tell the truth and that we can back up our concerns with data and then we can address those together in a relationship aspect, it's absolutely vital. So to the industry partners that are in here, especially in the last three years in my tenure, has been fantastic as we've really tried to bring industry previews, do sessions while we're here at these events and others and make sure that that communication is wide open so that we can move our capabilities forward. Thank you.

Gen. Herbert J. "Hawk" Carlisle, USAF (Ret.):

Excellent. Thanks Minnie. Yeah, nobody gets to the fight without air mobility command. There's a famous quote about tanker gas, right? I think that goes in there somewhere.

Gen. Mike Minihan:

They're about to tell

Gen. Herbert J. "Hawk" Carlisle, USAF (Ret.):

You. Okay, tanker people in the audience. There you go.

Gen. James B. Hecker:

Tanker gas.

Gen. Herbert J. "Hawk" Carlisle, USAF (Ret.):

General Hecker.

Gen. James B. Hecker:

Well, what keeps me up at night is following Minnie on a panel. I was a little nervous you were going to be up there walking around and I'm going, this is not good. But I would also like to thank Orville for a great tenure at the AFA, very well done. And Grace, it's been a great 38 years, been great working beside you and 14 more days, have a good time. You've enjoyed it. And I wouldn't be here today if it wasn't for General Carlisle, so thanks for everything you did for me, my family and the career.

But what keeps me up at night is what General Kelly started off with is what if we can't get Air Superiority? Because if we can't get Air Superiority, we're going to be doing the fight that's going on in Russia and Ukraine right now. And we know how many casualties that are coming out of that fight. And we know it's going to be very difficult to get Air Superiority, whether it's in my theater or whether it's in your theater. It's not a given, and it's been a given for the last 30 years. So we got to wake up and we got to make sure that we can do that and it's going to take a lot of hard work. We're doing some optimization of the Air Force trying to get after that. But we're also doing re-op optimization of NATO. Because NATO, since the fall or the end of the Cold War, we haven't been serious about fighting Russia.

Good thing is over the last year or two years, we've gotten the capability, not the capability. We've gotten the authorities that we need to try to do detailed planning to do targeting things that we haven't been able to do in the past and now we have that capability. So, the good news is we have five priorities in AIRCOM to make sure we do it. The first one's counter A2/AD to make sure we can get that Air Superiority. The second one is counter IADS to make sure that we can go against what we know is going to come against us. It's going to be one way attack vehicles and it's going to be cruise missiles and they're going to come in mass if you think there's a lot now, it's going to be worse and worse as we go on. And they're going to be low cost and a lot of people are going to be able to do that.

And then my third one is command and control. If we get cut off, how are we going to make sure that we can get commander's intent to the troops so they can get out there and do what they can do? And then our fourth one is information sharing. We need to share, in my case, with my 31 partners in NATO, and that is the cheapest way to get capability at very little cost, is if we share information with our NATO partners. And then the last one is going to be to make sure that we have the ability to do agile combat

employment. So that's what keeps me up at night. But we're getting after it in NATO and we're getting after it as the Air force.

Gen. Herbert J. "Hawk" Carlisle, USAF (Ret.):

Thanks General Hecker. Yeah, I think the value of the strength in NATO can't be overstated and just what we gain out of those relationships is incredible for us as a nation and the free world going forward, so well-spoken. General Schneider, so four days as a commander of Pacific Air Force. So you got it all figured out, I'm sure. And I'm sure what keeps you up at night is what happened four days ago. So over to you, General Schneider,

Gen. Kevin B. Schneider:

I was going to joke that jet lag is one of the things that's keeping me up right now. But while new to the job, not new to the theater and fall in on an awesome team that's at PACAF that has been doing the job and did a fantastic job with General Wilsbach, and then an amazing joint team with the components that are there on island as well as a team of allies and partners.

And I guess with that, in terms of the challenges to my sleep, the serious challenges to my sleep, and sir, you highlighted them in your opening remarks when you talked about all the issues that are out there around the Indo-Pacific, and sorry for those of you that have heard this last Friday, but there's a growing set of challenges. They are more severe, but they're also more interconnected.

So everything that you listed, it does not happen in isolation. So to that, the word that I would put maybe to wrap that up is just there's a greater volatility and a greater risk of escalation for what may on the surface be a smaller event to rapidly ratchet up and to go fairly high scale and to have connecting tissue to other events. And you look at the challengers in the region and you look at the regimes in Beijing and in Moscow and Pyongyang, they're opportunists. So they will take advantage if they see that the United States or the world is distracted elsewhere to pursue their own individual interests. And there's plenty of example for that. So, I would say that the volatility and the connectedness of the challenge gives great concern.

The reason I do sleep well at night, and it goes back to what I started with, is the teamwork of allies and partners. We do not do this alone. And this is not a China versus the United States challenge or a Russia versus the United States or North Korea versus the United States. The network of allies and partners of which we are a part is incredibly capable and it grows more capable each day. So I am encouraged by the fact that we are all making progress. And in terms of my own experience, having grown up in the PACAF theater, watching the evolution or my personal evolution with both the ROCAF and the Koku Jieitai to see where they are today versus where they are when I was a young lieutenant, there's nothing short of encouraging across the board. And that happens with a number of other Air Forces that I have not been able to fly with or work with yet. So I guess of all the positives that are out there, that network that continues to grow stronger every day as well as our joint force.

To your point about what can industry do? And that threads back in. The capabilities and the things that we bring on board for the United States Air Force have to have connection to the joint force, have to have connection to our partner Air Forces as well. We do not do anything alone. So I guess my push and my pitch to industry is the solutions that are offered up and the solutions that are provided have to have broad application across the board because we will fight and we will win as teams. And I think I'm preaching to the choir on that one. I'm pretty sure everyone understands that. Thank you.

Gen. Herbert J. "Hawk" Carlisle, USAF (Ret.):

Yeah, thank you very much, Gumby. I think the relationships, and I've seen it too, I spent most of my career in the Pacific, is the growing relationship. The things like Quad and the things that even the relationships that don't necessarily include us, the Japan-Vietnam relationship that's gotten so much better and created so much synergy there. So they're all valuable.

Gen. Kevin B. Schneider:

Yes, sir. Yeah, if I could pile on that, I think the things that move the needle at least in or the cause, reason for pause, and autocratic regimes around the world, the Five Eye partnership, the expanded Five Eye partnership, the Quad as you mentioned, the trilateral relationship that continues to grow with the United States, Japan and South Korea, things like that. Recognizing that if there are events, if there is an event that puts us on the edge of conflict, that there are a lot of people coming shoulder to shoulder to respond to that. And again, I take great encouragement from that growing network of partnerships both within our joint force and outside of it.

Gen. Herbert J. "Hawk" Carlisle, USAF (Ret.):

Thank you very much. Yeah, great point. So we're going to ask a couple individual questions. And General Kelly, I'll start with you. I remember in my days in your seat, the three words I hated most in the entire world were forced to source. Because we had red lines, which was a great plan. We're going to have... You can't, two to one, deploy to dwell. We're going to do all the plan. And of course invariably, you'd get in the tank and they'd go, "Yeah, sorry, you forced to source. You're going to send them anyway." I can only, well, actually I'm not sure I can't imagine with the challenge in our force. So looking at what you face today, the demand signal with the Middle East, escalating again with the INDOPACOM, and we all know the INDOPACOM wants as much west of the dateline as humanly possible, which is a challenge. And of course the ongoing challenge in the Ukraine and the NATO. So with respect to OT&E and the demand signal on ACC, could you give us some insight on how that's going?

Gen. Mark D. Kelly:

Yeah, sure. And just to chop up the OT&E as you mentioned, ACC is and organized train equip command. As you know, I tend to add on another letter, F, for force providing it goes to what you talked about with force to source or global force management.

So for the O piece of it, organizationally, obviously a lot of discussions with the GPC efforts that were rolled out yesterday. And that will get at some of the organizational guardrails we have going forward. Within ACC leading up to this, we tried to be ready for combat before combat, be ready for crisis before crisis, unity of effort in everything we do. And push authority down to lowest level because we can't say mission type orders and then not let them have the authority to execute the orders.

And then as far as the T goes, we've actually done pretty darn well. I'm biased on that, with the T piece. If you could say all roads to Desert Storms sort of went through Red Flag. And all roads to a pacing fight will still get to visit Red Flag, but then they'll stay a third week for what the chief and the secretary referenced yesterday, at Bamboo Eagle, which is where we integrate with our shipmates in the Navy because we're going to have to fight alongside our shipmates in the Navy. And we expose them to distances and we expose them to distributed ops of landing at places they didn't expect to land and take off from. And it's part task training, but it's pretty intense part task training of what we're doing. And they also all roads to a pacing, we'll have to go to our virtual testing and training center, because I just can't do to the Red Flag ranges what they will see in a pacing fight.

I can't GPS jam, com jam, data link jam, and I can't afford for them to see for the first time when they're working for John Schneider out in the Pacific. And so those training efforts have gone well.

I'm going to segue off what both General Hecker and General Schneider said about our allies and partners, all of our training events, and I mean every one of them, has to leverage what I would say is our two distinct advantages. And one of them is our allies and partners. Very often when our adversaries around the globe get together and have a meeting with their allies, they have to go to the mirror. There are none. We have the benefit of the best allies and partners on the planet and these gentlemen have to work those relationships every day and it's great, great work that we do.

The other one we have to leverage in all of our training environment is unlike any other service on the planet. We can integrate force package and synchronize across kinetic to non-kinetic and all the domains like no one's business. We still hold that advantage. And if we don't take advantage of those two advantages, we're missing out on the training environment. And so that's big stuff we've done in the training environment.

There's other stuff we've done in the training environment like bring on F-35 aggressors. I can't have the first fifth gen adversary they see be it J-20. I owe them that training before they see it.

And as far as the equipping piece, obviously there's a lot of discussion and chat on any topic you want. It could be CCAs, it could be NGAD, a thousand different topics. But it goes back to my original point, it's the enterprise of platform sensors weapons for their Air Superiority mission including the EMTI. And same thing with the electromagnetic spectrum that we have.

And then as far as forest providing, we had a lot of chat yesterday and I'm sure there's going to be a lot of chat over the next weeks and months over great power competition. But the most important ingredient of great power competition is great power. And so we need to negotiate from a position of strength. We've been in great power competition before, it's called the Cold War. And we have great Cold War veterans like yourself here and some others that were in the military in the mid-80s. But we need to be wide-eyed that we, like the Chief Allvin said yesterday, we were spread pretty thin. You look at the careers of anybody up here and sort like your career, you win flew an operational squadrons at Bitburg, an operational squadrons at Kadena, an operational squadrons at Eglin, an squadrons at Holloman. And there's squadrons at some of those places today, but there's zero operational squadrons. So we have to make sure that we optimize the force we have and it has to be as ready as can be. And so yeah, it is tough varsity business, sir.

Gen. Herbert J. "Hawk" Carlisle, USAF (Ret.):

I think you just called me old. Actually, sad to think. Yeah, I spent 12 years in the Cold War before the wall came down in 1990. I was actually in Berlin when the wall came down because at the time I was in a classified program that was exploitation of foreign assets and I happen to be there. So you did call me old, but that's okay, I can live with that. That's fine.

Gen. Mark D. Kelly:

But we flew together, so.

Gen. Herbert J. "Hawk" Carlisle, USAF (Ret.):

Yeah, we did. But great point. And I don't think people can underestimate, and they have a tendency to underestimate the value we gain from those two things you talked about, allies and partners. And then how we train and what we do and what we get to get our incredible men and women up to speed to fight the fight.

So same question for you, General Minihan. I think as we said earlier, nobody gets to the fight without AMC. And again, Ukraine, the Middle East, INDOPACOM, day-to-day. So meeting the commitments of what AMC is tasked with today, which are extraordinary, are there things that you're trying to do? Is there technologies you're trying to get after and how's it going?

Gen. Mike Minihan:

Absolutely. Well, to tie in, I gave a brief overview of some of the operational issues I have to deal with either right after I took command. OAR is an example, it was executed under General Van Ovost, but I received the after action report. Soon after, went into the sustained operations, which are still going on for the support of Ukraine. And then what happened last October with the Middle East crisis, which we're currently going under. So if you combine those operational items with what we did in Mobility Guardian this past summer, then you get some serious gaps, that have been identified with the data to back them up. And you can draw a picture of the things that we need to do to be successful across the spectrum.

So I've got this thing called a 10 line. And it is a bundle of the gaps that I want to close. I've got six months left in command and in my career. And I intend to close those gaps by the time I'm on that change of command stage. They can basically be broken down into four broad bends. The first is data, the second is decision advantage. How do we use that data to create a decision advantage? Development is in there. And then also the discipline that I spoke of earlier.

So I want to commend Grace and his team on Bamboo Eagle. So what Bamboo Eagle did last month, with phenomenal work by his team, phenomenal work by the Warfare Center under Basket Cunningham, phenomenal work by Red Flag and all the patch, all the patches that are bothered to get this right, really developed a scenario which we could work some things out. So in Mobility Guardian, I worked out max endurance operations where we could operate aircraft for longer than 24 hours.

Normally, we have a mission demand that's up here, and a human performance that's down here where the microphone is. And we lower the mission requirements to meet the human. And what we're really trying to do is elevate the human performance to meet the demands of the mission. And how can we do that now in a training environment where we have time to do the risk analysis, have time to build the data, have time to get all the technology both in the cockpit and wearables and such that can make that actually happen. So we give that a good ring out at Bamboo Eagle.

The second thing we did is we built on our success of palletized effects, specifically the JASSM-ER shot that we did in Mobility Guardian. And although we didn't do live drops in Bamboo Eagle, we went through the rehearsals in an environment with a high demand from the joint force, a high demand from the coalition. And we didn't white card anything. We just said, "Hey, here's the capability, how are we going to ring it out and get after it?" And that was successful.

But the one I want to pick on here is maneuver battle management. Maneuver battle management is the not fun part of battle management. Okay? The fun part of battle management is kill chain. The not fun part of battle management is all the things that need to happen so that we have the privilege to execute a kill chain. So do we have the gas in the right place? Do we have the munitions in the right place? Do we have the fuel in the right place? Do we have the fly fixed support and that whole enterprise that can fuse together so that we can maneuver our capabilities to a position of advantage so that they can be lethal?

Amateurs study? Tactics. Professional study? Victors study? Maneuver. Victors study maneuver. And what Bamboo Eagle did is gave us a realistic challenging scenario to get after the maneuver. And what's needed most for us to be successful is this connectivity. Have you heard me speak last time I was on the

AFA stage and I talked about 25 by 25? I want to get 25% of my fleet connected by the year 2025. It's not modest money, frankly, the resourcing has been a little frustrating. But we're continuing to endeavor because that doesn't just serve the mobility, it allows us to maneuver the exquisite joint coalition capabilities into a position advantage so that they can be successful.

The good news is, the readiness that underpins deterrence, which we do, we want, we want to be so ready that they wake up and they don't want to take us on, is the same readiness that underpins decisive victory.

And so Grace, what your team did in Bamboo Eagle and what it'll do in the following evolutions of Bamboo Eagle is really get us to that fine high side of readiness that has been I think a needed element as we rehearse ACE and other concepts. So I can't thank you, your team in enough. 25 by 25. I'm going to challenge everybody in here and my eight is about to freak up now, if you find me and say 25 by 25, I will drain every coin I got in his backpack till it's done. So track me down. And then you can flip it on the bar tonight for Fat Tuesday.

Gen. Herbert J. "Hawk" Carlisle, USAF (Ret.):

I think Lieutenant General Rick Moore is probably in the audience somewhere going, "25 by 25, I've heard that before." So it's deja vu all over again. Great point. And I think you're right. And I think your points are well taken. And again, I think many folks in this audience, a huge number of women and men that wear the uniform participated in Bamboo Eagle and the success was extraordinary. And that again, a credit to you and your whole team. So well done.

General Hecker, so I think we talked just briefly about it, but we would like know, so the Ukraine War, we're about to enter year three, we see what's happening. My question is, first of all is how's it going? But another one is, is it changing NATO, lessons learned? You're obviously NATO air command, so is there some things you can share with us on what we're learning and how it's going to change us going into the future?

Gen. James B. Hecker:

Definitely some things we can learn. We learned when somebody's back is up against the wall, they come up with a lot of creative solutions. And if they don't have a lot of money like Ukraine doesn't, they can figure it out. And we give them some exquisite weapons, some things that are pretty expensive, but that's not going to do it alone. And I think we're finding that out as well as the United States Air Force that we just can't concentrate on the exquisite, because we don't have enough money to buy all the exquisite stuff that we need. So we have to also bring some low end stuff. And let me give you some examples of what Ukraine has been able to do is they were trying to figure out how do I track all of these one-way UAVs that Russia is putting into theater.

You guys know if they come in at a hundred feet, you can't see them with a regular radar because you don't have line of sight over the horizon because of the curvature of the earth. So what they did, two guys from Ukraine, doctors that came and briefed me at Ramstein did this in their garage with their own money and they made this happen. What did they do? They grabbed 8,000 cell phones, and they put them on a six-foot pole and they put them all around the Ukraine and they put a microphone like this next to it so they could hear the one way UAVs coming overhead. Cost \$500. They were able to get headings, they're able to get velocity of these things. And then they put that into a computer system that went out to 200 mobile training units that had AAA and they had trained a guy for six hours to sit in the AAA and look at an iPad that would show them where the UAVs were coming in.

They had 84 of them that came in the other day. They tracked all 84, they shot down 80 with AAA. That's on the right side of the cost curve. As opposed to shooting them down with Patriots and SM-2 missiles. Just think of what just happened. One way UAVs put everyone in the game, to include the Houthis. And when they did their attack on 18 October, they had 21 come over at \$7,000 a piece and we shot them down with \$700,000 SM-2 missiles. That is not the right side of the cost curve. We need to be thinking this way as well. Can we get some low cost things to take down this, what we know is going to be one way, UAVs coming our way? AAA, directed energy, things with a deep magazine, microwave, there's a bunch of things out there, but we need to think about that to protect ourselves against that threat that's going to come in swarms.

What the Houthis did, what Russia's doing is nothing compared to what we're going to see in your theater later on and at very small cost they can do this. We need to do this ourselves. We talked about the value of partners. I have a lot, 31 great partners in NATO, soon to be 32. Not all of them can afford F-35s, but they can all afford a \$10,000 UAV. If we start doing the same thing, we'll get 15 other partners involved. They can launch and put a bunch of these if we have to, across Indo-Russian, and now we can empty their magazines where they're taking SA-22s, SA-21s and 23s going after \$10,000 One-Way UAVs that a partner produced and it cost us no money because they wanted to be part of the war. And now we just found a way for them to be part of the war and really part of deterrence. So that's a big lessons learned that we've had in our theater.

Gen. Herbert J. "Hawk" Carlisle, USAF (Ret.):

That's a fantastic story. I mean it is true. And I go back to, and we as a nation, in my humble opinion, there's got the most innovative young minds out there because of the nation that we live in and the way we grow our young women and men. And so that's my challenge I think to industry is, the U.S. government doesn't make anything, industry does. And so the ability of industry to innovate at the level we need to and at the pace we need to for what exactly Secretary Kendall talked about yesterday. And that is we've got to change now and we got to do it soon. And innovation's going to be the key to success. So great story. Thanks Scorch. That's well done.

We are a tad short on time. So what I would like to do is with the four-day commander of Pacific Air Forces, I'd like to give each an opportunity for closing comments on how things are going and to brag about your command a little bit.

Gen. Kevin B. Schneider:

Again, thanks very much. And again, it's both an honor and a privilege to be in PACAF once again. Having had the opportunity, again, to watch the theater evolve over 36 years in the Air Force, I'm going to use this word and I mean it, we are in a fight right now, and you don't have to go far beyond what General Carlisle said. If you want Google up Chinese cyber attacks against the United States and you'll find a bunch of articles written in the last week about the operations in the gray space against the United States. You can probably do a couple of other quick Google searches to take a look at malign activity against the Philippines and the vicinity of the Second Thomas Shoal and then all around the region. So one of the concerns I have, we talked about the volatility of the region, but as a nation, I think there has to be a recognition of the severity of the situation that we're in and the potential for conflict.

Deterrence, we've been able to maintain the peace and stability of this region for over 80 years to the presence of the United States military and that of our allies and partners. And that stability has underwritten prosperity for which all have benefited. On the flip side of that deterrence coin is combat capability. So we must continue to evolve, we must continue to recognize the environment that we're in and we've been doing that and we must continue to maintain the overmatch. So it is a tremendous

amount of teamwork that enables all of that, there's a tremendous amount of teamwork with members here in the audience. So I thank you for all of that and look forward to working with all of you going forward.

Gen. Herbert J. "Hawk" Carlisle, USAF (Ret.):

Thanks, General Schneider. General Minihan, closing comment.

Gen. Mike Minihan:

I don't lose sleep because of our amazing Airmen. So Airmen fill the gap between what they have versus what they need. They do that with tenacity, they do that with courage, they do that with professionalism, they do that with passion. It doesn't matter to me whether you fly, fix or support. Your value to the mission is not proportional to your proximity to the cockpit. It takes all of us to get this done. The staging is an example of that, each one of us have worked decades together for and around each other. And one day, there are people in this audience right now that are going to be up on the stage, they're going to be able to say that the journey was fantastic. They're going to say that the Airmen are still the magic. They're going to applaud the families, the service and sacrifice and you've called upon. We hope that deterrence is the lens, but if called upon, the decisive victory will be delivered by the Airmen that we have. So thank you very much.

Gen. Herbert J. "Hawk" Carlisle, USAF (Ret.):

Thank you. Well-spoken. General Hecker.

Gen. James B. Hecker:

Well, first thanks for the opportunity. And I had actually just like to think many, it is going to be six months give or take. So I don't know if you're going to be at another AFA or not, but what you have brought to mobility command is just unbelievable. You've put a spark underneath that command and they truly know what they need to do and how important they are to the fight. And you've really made that happen and brought that apparent and everyone knows about it. So thank you very much.

Gen. Herbert J. "Hawk" Carlisle, USAF (Ret.):

General Kelly.

Gen. Mark D. Kelly:

Yes, sir. Well first of all, thanks sir for your hosting and your great service to the nation that continues. I thought yesterday was great. I think it'll be interesting as we go forward. Being a simple kid from the farm, to me, great power competition is about building the ultimate team for the ultimate team competition. It's also about getting serious about force on force that affects the nation and the globe. And when you take a scan at the globe and you look at different nation states that are pretty darn serious about this, as you mentioned President Xi's comments, they're serious about this war fight. If you look at Russia, they're pretty serious about their war fight. If you look at Ukraine, they're pretty serious about their war fight for existential purposes. If you look at what Iran's doing, they're pretty serious about a war fight. And zero of those nations operate under continuing resolution.

The other thing I would highlight of those nations, whether they're adversaries or whether they're great friends like Ukraine is they take airbase defense really seriously. And if we are challenged as a DOD with a small airplane, UAV hurting our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, and Guardians at a Tower 22,

something that General Schneider is going to face, we all need to take serious. And so thanks for taking this serious. The team needs you and I'll look forward to seeing you on the other side.

Gen. Herbert J. "Hawk" Carlisle, USAF (Ret.):

Thank you very much.

So I'll close quickly with a thank you. Congratulations. One comment again. Orville, General Wright, you've been extraordinary, your leadership's outstanding. So thank you very much for everything you've done for our nation and our Air Force and our Space Force. And General Kelly, again, it's been an honor and a privilege. You've been simply outstanding and you got a lot to be proud of. And again, this nation owes you a debt of gratitude for your sacrifice.

And it's what everyone said up here, and I'll just say it one more time. We have an ACE metric advantage. Every other nation in the world tries to match our Airmen and Guardians, and not one of them can. The professional enlisted force we have is second to none. And every other nation anywhere in the world that tries to create it cannot because of the people that we have that do job day in and day out. And if you look at the officers and the NCOs and the Airmen out there and the Guardians out there, it is an extraordinary, extraordinary honor to be among them. And I got to say one more time, thank you for everything, for all you that wear the uniform. Thank you for your service and God bless y'all. Thank you very much.

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