Relevance of Air Superiority

The relevance of air superiority in the modern world is vastly overstated. The USAF has faced no air superiority force since the Korean War. Nor have our ground troops faced an enemy air-to-surface threat.

US air superiority fighters are aimed at enemy fighters—the irrelevant half (of the problem. Our foreseeable enemies achieve air superiority with competent, relatively affordable, highly mobile Russian vehicles carrying surface-to-air missiles (IR radar, and optically guided), and two 30mm cannon (the Tangkuska). These are armed with SA–6, SA–8 and SA–10 missiles. The F–22 only counters non-existent enemy fighters. Hence air-to-surface F–16s, A–10s, and F–15s become the de facto air superiority aircraft. Attempts to equip the F–22 to suppress enemy defenses are easily defeated by enemy tactics used in Vietnam and Serbia.

The USAF is already over-equipped to handle any imaginable air superiority problem. Today, Air Combat Command is capable of handling any coalition of air superiority threats. Air Combat Command has the most important factor—competent pilots, the second most important factor—large numbers (1,600–2,400 fighters), and the least important advantage—the best aircraft. In Germany during World War II US numbers, not quality, reigned supreme.[5] The USAF has always had and has always depended upon superior numbers to win. Numbers guarantee victory. Numbers develop intensity and allow multiple attacks.

The US has no realistic future air superiority problem facing it. A sane US will not war with India, China, or Russia. Nor will we war with France, England, Japan, and Germany. None of these nations will attack the US. Other countries are not threats. Nor will we war with our friends to whom we sold US aircraft.[6] The US must minimize its enemies, not create them artificially to sustain the arms industry. Even Canada has been listed as a possible threat! Yet, the US continues to seek foreign sales before our modern aircraft see service in the USAF and US Navy. (Examples—the US Navy's F–14, F–18E, and the F–22.)

The conjured need to cope with our weapons places our country in a self-perpetuating arms race with itself.

CONCLUSION

Money expended on the program will weaken Air Combat Command and the USAF in two ways—

By getting involved with an aircraft that has no function, and no relevance to modern wars.

By denying themselves funds they really need—for training and for new aircraft to support a US Army, completely shipped of supporting airpower.

Approximately 90 percent of the program funding can still be saved, and reprogrammed to relevant Air Force programs.

ARTICLE BY JAMES L. HECHT

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 9, 2000

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, as we go forward with the budget process, I'd like to bring the attention of my colleagues to an article published in the Baltimore Sun. The author is a senior fellow at the Center for Public Policy and Contemporary Issues at the University of Denver. Although I don't necessarily agree with all the points he makes, I think the article is valuable for purposes of informed debate.

[The Sun: Tuesday, March 21, 2000]

SPECIAL INTEREST DEFENSE

(By James L. Hecht)

For a while, it looked as if Congress might do the right thing: kill an unneeded weapons program, saving $60 billion and increasing security. But in the end, Congress gave a higher priority to the interests of Lockheed Martin, providing $1 billion in this year's budget to buy up to six F–22 fighters—and keeping alive the possibility of buying more than 300 more at a cost of at least $187 million each.

The F–22 is an example of how the military budget is driven more by the desire of members of Congress to get re-elected than by security. The public interest is no match for lobbyists for the military-industrial complex who in 1996 contributed an average of $18,065 to every member of Congress, almost three times the level of tobacco-industry influence peddling.

Why is the F–22 an unneeded weapon? The American F–15 and F–16 fighters are the best in the world and, if more fighters are needed, these can be built for less than one-quarter the cost of an F–22. Moreover, the F–22 may be outdated soon by the Joint Strike Fighter, an even better plane on which the Pentagon is spending billions for development.

We spend more than $30 billion a year to maintain more than 10,000 nuclear warheads. A 1,000-warhead force with the destructive force of 40,000 Hiroshima explosions would be more than enough—and save about $17 billion a year.

How political pork supersedes military needs is demonstrated by the appropriation in last year's budget of $435 million for seven C–130 cargo transport planes. The Pentagon requested only one. They got seven because manufacture of these planes provided jobs in Newt Gingrich's district.

Huge expenditures for unneeded weapons is one reason that U.S. military spending is more than twice as much as all potential adversaries combined, including Russia, China, Iraq, Iran and North Korea. While polls indicate that 72 percent of Americans believe it better to have too much defense than too little, 83 percent think that spending should be no greater than that of all potential adversaries combined.

America's unreasonable military spending also results from the policy that the United States be able to simultaneously fight and win two major regional wars without the help of allies. This two-war doctrine is rooted in the idea that the United States should be able to exercise unilaterally its ''global responsibilities.''

But having this capability and then using it to act alone or with little military support from allies—as we did in Kosovo and continue to do in the skies over Iraq—decreases our security. We make bitter enemies of people that are no threat to us militarily, but can be a serious threat if in anger and frustration they resort to terrorism.

Our security also is decreased because our huge military spending consumes money that otherwise could be spent on education. With the economic success of nations becoming increasingly more dependent on a well-educated work force, shortchanging educational needs is a threat to the economic security of Americans in the 21st century.

Security is the most important function of government. But we should not—in the name of security—needlessly spend tens of billions of dollars a year for the benefit of politically connected interests.

ISSUES IN CYPRUS AND KOSOVO

HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 9, 2000

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, Harry Moskos is the highly-respected editor of the Knoxville News-Sentinel, the major daily newspaper for East Tennessee. More importantly, everyone who gets to know Mr. Moskos soon realizes he is one of the finest men they have ever known.

Over the years, he has developed a real expertise in foreign policy. He writes honest, sincere thoughtful editorials, without undue prejudices or special axes to grind. He is certainly not beholden to or controlled by any special interests.

Within the last few days, he has written two very important pieces which I would like to call to the attention of my colleagues and other readers of the RECORD.

The first is an insightful editorial on the history, current situation, and what needs to be done now to settle the thorny Cyprus issue. He points out that the Turkish invasion in 1974 resulted in 200,000 Greek Cypriots being expelled from their homes and almost that many Turks and Turkish Crypriots living illegally on land and in homes that are not theirs.

The second article is one that was distributed by the Scripps-Howard News-Service and reprinted in the Washington Times and other newspapers. It deals with the situation in Kosovo and the continuing cycle of violence, ethnic cleansing and retribution.

I hope that those in the State Department and in the Congress who deal most directly with these issues will give serious consideration to these editorials by Harry Moskos.

[From The Knoxville News-Sentinel, June 4, 2000]

TWO SIDES MUST TALK—OPPORTUNITIES MORE FAVORABLE THAN IN PAST FOR SETTLEMENT OF CYPRUS ISSUE

The eastern Mediterranean sovereign state of Cyprus has been forcibly divided in two since the invasion of the island republic in 1974 by Turkey. Now, 26 years later, the issue of Cyprus remains one of the world's thorniest international problems awaiting resolution.

Reflecting the position of President Clinton, Secretary of Defense William Cohen has stressed that the status quo in Cyprus is not acceptable. Since the invasion, the Cypriot government controls the south of the island while the north is under Turkish occupation with more than 35,000 troops from mainland Turkey stationed there in violation of numerous United Nations Security Council resolutions. In fact, most of the Turks now living in the occupied areas of the island are not Turkish Cypriots but are Turkish settlers.

About 200,000 Greek Cypriots, expelled from their homes in the north, are still prevented from returning.

Historically, Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots lived in comparative harmony until recent time. The Turkish invasion further increased the tension—an invasion in which some believe then-American Secretary of State Henry Kissinger played a direct role by working behind the scenes with Greece's then-military junta to successfully oust Archbishop Makarios as Cypriot president. Turkey used the coup against Makarios as a pretext to invade Cyprus.