

## FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Reader,

This month, the journal learned of the February 2022 passing of its oldest subscriber, Lieutenant General Harry E. Goldsworthy, USAF, Ret. Lieutenant General Goldsworthy, 107 years old, was preceded in death in 2010 by his wife of 73 years, Edith Kathryn. Goldsworthy, born in Spokane, Washington, graduated from Washington State College with a reserve commission as a second lieutenant in 1936 and went on to Army Air Corps pilot training in 1939.

Goldsworthy flew submarine patrols and B-25 strafers in World War II, holding squadron and group commands. He later flew B-29s and was promoted to brigadier general while commander of the task force that activated the first Minuteman ICBM wing at Malmstrom AFB, Montana. Before retiring in 1973, he held positions including director of production, headquarters US Air Force, commander of the Aeronautical System Division at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, and deputy chief of staff for systems and logistics, headquarters, US Air Force.

In a fitting tribute to Lieutenant General Goldsworthy's years serving a global mission and leading in the early years of strategic deterrence, the summer issue of *Æther: A Journal of Strategic Airpower & Spacepower* focuses on strategic competition and deterrence, including the intercontinental ballistic missile component of the nuclear triad.

Our issue begins with a senior leader perspective led by Lieutenant General B. Chance Saltzman and coauthored by James Forsyth and J. Wesley Hutto. They argue that after a 30-year hiatus, great power politics are back and with them, conflict and, perhaps, great power war. Given these stakes, they offer 10 propositions concerning international relations.

This marked shift in the international order includes changing international security dynamics. Our Strategic Competition forum leads with an article by Ginta Palubinskas who argues the lack of cohesion between the United States and its European allies has called established relationships into question, complicated longstanding international issues, and eroded protections offered by NATO. She examines the Alliance at 70 and assesses its ability to keep the peace in a changing security environment. And the changes are not limited to Europe of course.

Noting the erosion in US military advantages across the spectrum of Taiwan contingencies, Mackenzie Eaglen and John Ferrari, in our second article in the forum,

contextualize the evolving conventional Sino-American military balance and assess capability gaps across the US armed forces, highlighting key investments that would bolster the services' and Taiwan's own conventional capabilities for the defense of the island.

Our second forum, Approaches to Deterrence, begins with an article by Benjamin Jamison. He argues our noncredible countervalue deterrent threats call for a modification to the counterforce targeting model. Tailored targeting, when paired with a deliberate strategic messaging strategy, synthesizes adversary vulnerabilities and American political objectives to produce unique targeting solutions applicable to various contingencies, resulting in a continuum of effective deterrent options along the entire spectrum of conflict.

Stephen Cimbala and Adam Lowther analyze the US nuclear force structure in the second article of the forum, arguing for the necessity of modernizing not just the ground-based leg of the US nuclear triad, but the submarine and bomber legs as well. The United States must not only meet but also exceed the nuclear capabilities and modernization efforts of its adversaries, and essential to this is modernizing the aging ICBM fleet, in particular, replacing aging Minuteman IIIs with the Sentinel ICBM.

In our third article in the forum, Michelle Black and Lana Obradovic observe that current US strategies and plans must work within a complex, multiplayer scenario that demands a multi-actor deterrence strategy rather than the traditional Cold-War-era dyadic structure. Multi-actor deterrence, they argue, recognizes multiple state and nonstate actors operating within a new security environment in which nuclear proliferation, cyber and space threats, and regional and hybrid conflicts simultaneously exist and influence their decision-making processes.

David Benson concludes our forum, noting that most cyberattacks are not attempts to coerce or deterrence failures, but are attempts to alter the balance of power. He argues that while balancing affects the balance of power by increasing power, states can also affect the balance of power by decreasing their competitors' power, or "handicapping" through the targeted and deliberate use and manipulation of information. The decreased costs and global scope have moved handicapping from the periphery of statecraft to a central position in international associations. *Æ*

~The Editor

### **Disclaimer and Copyright**

The views and opinions in *Æther* are those of the authors and are not officially sanctioned by any agency or department of the US government. This document and trademarks(s) contained herein are protected by law and provided for noncommercial use only. Any reproduction is subject to the Copyright Act of 1976 and applicable treaties of the United States. The authors retain all rights granted under 17 U.S.C. §106. Any reproduction requires author permission and a standard source credit line. Contact the *Æther* editor for assistance: [aether-journal@au.af.edu](mailto:aether-journal@au.af.edu).