

FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Reader,

Thank you for taking time to read our fall issue. We are deeply honored to feature as our "Senior Leader Perspective," the French Air and Space Force, *Strategic Vision 2022*, authored by Chief of Staff General Stéphane Mille. In order to deter, defend, and defeat, General Mille requires a force that is audacious in modernization efforts, drawing on the aviator spirit of challenge and innovation; agile, open-minded, and connected; and focused on training and combat readiness of the current and future force. The French Air and Space Force continues to be a stalwart strategic partner for the US Department of the Air Force.

The Honorable Robert Gates, who worked under eight presidential administrations between 1969 and 2011, notably as the director of the Central Intelligence Agency (1991–93) and as the Secretary of Defense (2006–11), once observed that for US presidents, "if they are completely honest with themselves, with rare exception the most vivid memories are not of victory and joy but of crisis and defeat. . . . This is why character counts for so much in a President. In the White House, the elation of victory is fleeting and the burden of responsibility is enduring."¹

Elsewhere, Gates writes that, unlike most people's conception of the place of a US president at the top of a "pyramid," in truth, the president sits "at the bottom of a funnel," into which on a daily basis "hundreds of thousands of reports from all over the world" are poured. "Every major problem—and a lot of minor ones, too—in the world pops out of that funnel onto that table, where nearly every day that small group of people [typically 8] helps the president decide the fate of our country (and that of many others) and, very often, makes life-and-death decisions."²

Among other ideas, our fall issue contemplates some of the consequential and overlapping roles of the US president—commander-in-chief, national security executive, and the lead and final voice in and face of US foreign policy. Analyses of executive orders, past wars, and national strategic documents attest to the "enduring responsibility" of the president. Our first forum, "Policy, Strategy, and the President,"

1. Robert M. Gates, *From the Shadows: The Ultimate Insider's Story of Five Presidents and How They Won the Cold War* (New York: Touchstone, 1996), 574.

2. Robert M. Gates, *Exercise of Power: American Failures, Successes, and a New Path Forward in the Post-Cold War World* (New York: Vintage, 2020), 58–59.

begins with a legal analysis of the notion of military necessity as it applies to cyberspace operations outside of armed conflict but ordered by the president. Thomas Burks argues that reframing conflict as strategic competition restores flexibility to the notion of military necessity, expanding what can be considered a military advantage.

In our second article in the forum, David Lorenzo conducts a case study of the George H. W. Bush administration's actions in the months immediately preceding the Persian Gulf War. He argues the administration engaged a particular typological approach to conflict, one that ultimately identified as a matter of urgency, a favorable resolution of the conflict. In our final article in the forum, Philip Hayek takes a novel approach to the study of the national security strategy. He analyzes it through the lens of rhetorical genre studies and concludes it is an independent genre, one that both reflects the priorities and *weltanschauung* of its presidential authors as well as constructing and responding to our national security situation.

We then turn to our "Theory and Strategy" forum and Heather Venable's eight themes integral to the study of airpower. A strong intellectual grounding in (1) the history of strategic bombardment, (2) the efficacy of strategic bombardment, (3) a more nuanced model for airpower, (4) balancing direct and indirect airpower, (5) enabling airpower for the future fight, (6) analyzing continuity and change in the history of airpower, (7) civil-military relations, and (8) the role of airpower in the context of other domains of warfare, will prepare future Air Force leaders for strategic and operational success.

Our second article in the forum presents a fresh perspective on Carl von Clausewitz and Space. In particular, Randall Carlson and Ron Gurantz identify four potential sources of space friction that emerge in space strategy and operations: the space environment, spacecraft-maneuvering limitations, space intelligence, and the reliance on complex technological solutions. Mitigating these sources of friction is critical, but the military must also plan for the resulting frictional tradeoffs.

In our final forum, "Africa," Jessica Borowicz argue that given Djibouti's location, relative stability, and existing US capabilities and investments in the country, it will remain strategically important for years to come. This is true even as nations along the Bab el-Mandeb Strait develop ports of their own.

In closing, Team Æther would like to recognize and thank our reviewers. These expert academics and practitioners ensure our scholarly credentials and do so without compensation for the many hours spent providing careful feedback on submissions. We depend on their subject matter expertise to keep the journal's content relevant, thoughtful, and well-researched. The journal and its sister operations-focused journal, *Air & Space Operations Review*, are generally categorized as military studies journals, but the research/policy focus across a diverse range of topics including airpower theory, civil-military affairs, science and technology, systems engineering, leadership, military and national security strategy, artificial intelligence, foreign affairs, air operations, space operations, and ethics means our required breadth of subject matter expertise is wide, to say the least.

So to the following individuals, including journal contributors, each an expert in their field by virtue of a terminal degree, a long career, or both, thank you very much for your time— past, present, or promised—spent supporting the journals: Andrew Akin, Christian Anrig, Filomeno Arenas, Todd Arnold, David Benson, Louis René Beres, Robert Bettinger, Michelle Black, Todd Book, Molly Braun, Maria Burczynska, Stephen Burgess, Ryan Burke, Chris Cain, Garick Chamberlin, Andrea Charron, Stephen Cimbala, J. P. Clark, Andrew Clayton, Mark Clodfelter, Damon Coletta, Chris Colliver, Daniel Connelly, Conrad Crane, GK Cunningham, Chad Dacus, Jim Davitch, Melvin Deaile, Everett Dolman, Jared Donnelly, Scott Drylie, Charles Dunlap, Michael Dziejczak, Antulio Echevarria, Michael Eisenstadt, Ryan Engle, James Fergusson, David Finkelstein, Jim Forsyth, Brian Fry, Cristina Garafola, Billy Giannetti, Benjamin Gochman, Derrill Goldizen, Tim Goodroe, Christina Goulter, Heather Gregg, Kelly Grieco, Achala Gunasekara-Rockwell, Ernest Gunasekara-Rockwell, Lawrence Grinter, Stephen Hamilton, Michael Hankins, Dale Hayden, Peter Hays, Jordan Hayworth, Eric Heginbotham, Megan Hennessey, John Hinck, Paul Hoffman, Tim Hoyt, Tony Hughes, JP Hunerwadel, Jonathan Hunt, Wes Hutto, Mark Jacobsen, Benjamin Jamison, Thomas Keaney, James Keeley, Michael Kraig, Matthew Kroenig, Benjamin Lambeth, Brent Langhals, Wiley Larson, Brian Laslie, Sale Lilly, Adam Lowther, Steve Marrin, Richard Marsh, Steve Martinez, Kevin McCaskey, Jared McKinney, Phillip Meilinger, Ann Mezzell, Richard Muller, Brendan Mulvaney, Jason Newcomer, Richard Newton, Lana Obradovic, Galen Ojala, Christopher Paige, David Palkki, Ginta Palubinskas, Mike Pavelec, Joseph Piroch, Brian Price, Kyle Rassmussen, Robert Reardon, Edwin Redman, Christopher Rein, Dan Ritschel, James Rogers, Nick Sambaluk, Tony Sampson, Dan Sanders, Jorg Schimmelpfennig, Joshua Schwartz, Jorge Serafin, Mario Serna, John Shields, Dennis Skocz, Art Speyer, J. William Sutcliffe, Dick Szaf-ranski, Brent Talbot, Michael Tate, Samantha Taylor, John G. Terino Jr., Mike Thomas, Teera Tony Tunyavongs, David Umphress, Gilles van Nederveen, Heather Venable, Mark Visger, James Walsh, Evelyn Watkins-Bean, Larry Weaver, Michael Weaver, Edward White, Wendy Whitman Cobb, Bishane Whitmore, Edie Williams, Michael Young, Michael Zmuda, and Ben Zweibelson. ~ The Editor

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