

Dear Reader,

As conflict between Israel and Iran threatens to expand, and Russia continues its war of attrition against Ukraine, air operations are persistently at the forefront of national security discourse. Military planners and strategists are absorbing real-world lessons regarding applications of and advances in contemporary air operations that have profound implications for future battles and wars in which the United States will undoubtedly engage. Our Spring 2024 issue of *Air & Space Operations Review* explores some key aspects of air operations, planning, and strategy.

The first forum, **Air Operations**, opens with an analysis of the B-21 Raider. Retired Brigadier General Paula Thornhill, USAF, and Shane Praiswater argue that in the move to pulsed operations, a rift has emerged between standoff and stand-in tactical philosophies in the combat air forces. The Raider has the capabilities to bridge this divide and help transcend long-standing parochial proclivities that have stalled the creative application of airpower. In the second article in the forum, Mark Callan proposes that airfields are centers of gravity in their own right. Accordingly, the Air Force needs to reorganize its airfields into maneuverable rhizomatic teams, mitigating the shortfalls posed by the traditional root-tree organization of service airfields.

The forum concludes with an examination of analytic standards in military intelligence. Jack Duffield finds that existing US and UK analytic standards' focus on rigor, while appropriate for the production of strategic intelligence, is less effective in producing timely, relevant analysis at the tactical and operational levels of war. The US Air Force's implementation of analytic standards provides an example of how to more effectively apply such standards at these levels.

The second forum, **Planning and Strategy**, leads with a discussion about operational art. John Corrado explores the history of operational art over the centuries and assesses its importance in contemporary military planning and strategy, against state and nonstate actors alike. In the second article in the forum, Brian Price defines decision advantage and the concept of initiative against the backdrop of John Boyd's observe, orient, decide, act (OODA) loop, finding that decision advantage is necessary to operationalizing initiative. In the final article of the forum and the issue, Tim Georgetti argues for the notion of deterrence from space, reframing space capabilities—such as orbital-class rocket resupply and space-based solar power—as both powerful deterrents and liabilities in need of defense.

As always, we welcome thoughtful, well-researched responses to our articles, with a potential for publication in a future issue. Thank you for your continued support of the journal.

~The Editor

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