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American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics

Remarks as Delivered by Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center, Washington, D.C., Tuesday, February 19, 2002 .

Thanks, Pete [Aldridge, Jr., Under Secretary for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics]. We had a little help running the Department even when it was just Rumsfeld and me, home alone. Pete just told me at lunch that you had a panel that told you there was no transformation in the budget and then he introduces me by saying I'm in charge of transformation, so I know when I've been set up. [Laughter.]

But it is a great team and Pete is a great part of it. It was a great transition, too. I've had, I don't know, at least as an amateur historian, an opportunity to witness a number of transitions from one administration to another. I've never seen anything where I think the baton was passed as smoothly from the Cohen Defense Department to the Rumsfeld Defense Department, and a key person in doing that was [Former Deputy Secretary of Defense] Rudy de Leon, and I'm glad to see he's here still at work chairing this conference. And Rudy, we thank you for what you've done and what you continue to do. You're a great public servant.

This building is a magnificent place, but I must say I always wondered what Ronald Reagan, that great apostle of small government, would think about having his name on a building like this. [Laughter.]

In 1982 President Reagan gave a speech to members of the British Parliament, and he paid tribute to the contribution that Parliament represented to mankind--in his words, "the great civilized ideas, individual liberty, representative government and the rule of law under God." Then he talked about the reluctance of some in the West to stand up for these ideas that, again, in Reagan's words, "have done so much to ease the plight of man and the hardships of our imperfect world."

He went on to tell a story about an elderly English woman whose home was bombed during the blitz.

As rescuers searched through her house, they found a bottle of brandy that she'd placed behind the staircase--the only thing in her house that was left standing. When they got to her, the poor lady was barely conscious, so a rescuer pulled the cork from the brandy and gave her a taste of it. As she quickly came around she said, "Here now, there now, put that back. That's for emergencies." [Laughter.]

And in 1982 President Reagan's observation was "the emergency is upon us". His words were true in 1982 and they're true again today. The world has changed once again and the emergency is upon us. And we cannot be reluctant to stand up for the ideals that continue to make America, in particular, a beacon for others around the world.

September 11th is a stark reminder that there are those who oppose everything that this country stands for. It was a reminder that mortal threats to national security did not end with the Cold War or with the passing of the 20th Century. It was a reminder that we can expect, indeed we must expect, new challenges to national security to come and surprise us again in the future.

There's been a revolution in threats and that calls for revolution in how we think about defense. Today I'd like to talk briefly about some of the changes that we made and how we're thinking about defense in the Department since Secretary Rumsfeld arrived just a little over a year ago--how we're thinking about defense in the context of wars in the future as well as the war of today.

I'm going to start by talking about the wars of the future because, even as we absorb the implications of the surprise that struck us on September 11th, we've got to resist the temptation to think that an attack that was previously unfamiliar to us, that form of horrendous terrorism, is now the new definition of the familiar and the expected.

We know that surprise has got to be a central element in our defense planning and where we can't prevent surprise, we have to have the ability to respond to it. We've got to depart from the mindset created by the seeming certainty of the Cold War. Of course, even the Cold War surprised us more than we acknowledged, but clearly we're now facing a world where surprise and uncertainty are the dominant themes.

Dealing with surprise and uncertainty was indeed the overarching theme that guided our recent major defense review, a review that was largely completed before September 11th. Indeed, I remember sitting at a breakfast with Secretary Rumsfeld the morning of September 11th, with a number of members of Congress, talking about the fact that--we were sort of previewing the QDR [Quadrennial Defense Review]--talking about the fact that we have got to be prepared for surprises. We had no idea that we would face a surprise as horrendous as the one we faced just a couple of hours later.

But, in dealing with surprise we concluded that we've got to move away from trying to define threats with great specificity, geographically, coming from particular countries with particular orders of battle, and instead move to a capabilities-based approach to defense planning, a capabilities-based approach that says we may not know who exactly is going to threaten us, but we can have some idea of what they

may threaten us with. We can have some idea of what adversaries may view as our weaknesses-- weaknesses that they may strive to exploit. We've got to think about what has now become a familiar term, asymmetric threats. And we also have to think about how to exploit our asymmetric advantages-- advantages in precision strike, advantages in intelligence, advantages in operating under the sea.

One of the things that we tried to do in the QDR was to put some definition on the term that has acquired great currency, transformation. Transformation can mean a lot of different things to different people. But, I think in order to energize the Department of Defense and to energize the industry that is so ably represented here today, it's important to try to give some definition to what transformation is about.

As Secretary Rumsfeld has said, "transformation is about an awful lot more than bombs and bullets and dollars and cents. It's about new approaches. It's about culture. It's about mindsets and ways of thinking about old things in new ways."

I'd like to underscore that transformation can't mean transforming 100 percent of your force overnight. It's more probably like transforming 10 percent of your force over the course of a decade. But if you change that 10 percent you can, in fact, change the capability of the entire force. That is our aim.

Indeed, if you go back to one of the famous historical examples of transformation, the development of armored warfare by the Germans during the period between the two World Wars, you'll find that that is roughly the percentage of the German army that had been transformed to effect blitzkrieg in 1939 and 1940.

It's also significant to note that Germany was not the country that invented the tank, nor were the Germans the first to use the tank in warfare. But Germany was the first to truly exploit the potential of tanks and the communications that made deep penetrations possible. Combined with air power, artillery and infantry, the Germans, with roughly an equal number of tanks as the British and French on the other side, were able to defeat their adversaries in the matter of a few weeks.

That suggests that, along with transformations in technology, we have to have transformations in how we think, how we lead, how we train, how we exercise, and how we fight. That is the only way to get the most from our transformational technology.

Even now we are seeing how changes in technology demand changes in our culture. I got a briefing not long ago by an Air Force group that included a young F-15 pilot. She was a young woman who had to be persuaded to give up her job as a rated pilot and instead fly a Predator from an office located somewhere in the United States. As you can imagine, for someone whose career was destined to be in a cockpit, it was a difficult choice. But consider how important the Predator has proved to our present campaign and what it promises for the future. So, at this moment, what it means to be a fighter pilot in the U.S. Air Force is undergoing a transformation.

But transformation is also, I think, about putting money where your mouth is. I was told, as I said jokingly here, that there's no transformation in this budget. Pete and I would be happy to recount to you the long hours we have spent going over this budget almost line by line making sure that there was transformation in it.

We have some \$21 billion in the '03 budget in transformational programs. That's a \$5 billion increase over where it was before--\$5 billion, that I might add, is hard to squeeze out when there are many other demands in that budget, particularly demands for health care and retirement costs that are soaring, demands to take proper care of our people and fix up their housing. We have a \$5 billion increase in '03 and a \$70 billion increase over the course of the FYDP [Future Years Defense Plan]. That's by a fairly tight definition of what is transformational. It doesn't, for example, include the \$1.5 billion that we've invested in buying JDAMs [joint direct attack munitions] and other precision-guided munitions, which are obviously key to making other transformational systems effective.

One of the things that we did in the QDR and one of the things that I think has helped to energize thinking about transformation was to try to put more precision into what we mean. It's an exercise that's going to continue this year, but I think the six transformational goals that we identified in this year's QDR really are a good definition, at least as a first attempt, of where we want to go in the future. And our experience in the war in Afghanistan shortly after that document was published, to some extent I think, confirms the validity of those directions. Let me just talk about each of them somewhat briefly.

The first and the highest priority is to protect our bases of operation and particularly our homeland. That was evident even before September 11th. If we needed anything to bring it home, of course, September 11th has done that.

But September 11th was just a glimpse of what can happen. If terrorists can do that with commercial airliners, just imagine what they can do with weapons of mass destruction. Those who plotted in the caves of Afghanistan have left behind diagrams of American cities and landmarks and plans to acquire anthrax and radiological weapons, suggesting the scope of what we could face.

So as part of this budget we are investing in a refocused and revitalized missile defense program to start addressing the mortal threat posed by weapons of mass destruction. There's some \$7.8 billion in the budget in '03. That's actually a slight decrease. Indeed we killed one program. I think, Pete, this is the first time in the history of the Defense Department we've actually invoked a Nunn/McCurdy breach to kill a program that was dying. We were serious when we said we were going to invest in things that work, but we're going to kill the things that don't work.

But I think it's important to note that we're spending more than that, \$10.5 billion in '03, a \$3 billion increase over our '02 numbers and a \$5 billion increase over '01, on that whole complex of programs that come under the heading of anti-terrorism, counter-terrorism, and consequence management. The terrorists have definitely gotten our attention.

A second crucial transformational priority, one whose importance has been demonstrated very strongly

in Afghanistan, is the ability to deny enemies sanctuary, particularly by exploiting capabilities for long range precision strikes.

I noticed as we started on the QDR during the summer that a lot of people, both proponents and the skeptics about long range precision strike, seemed to think this was another euphemism for "victory through air power." But, in fact, long range precision strike involves ground forces as well, and in some cases might even be primarily ground forces.

I still remember quite vividly 10 years ago when I was working for then-Secretary of Defense Cheney during the Gulf War when one of our biggest preoccupations were the Iraqi SCUD missiles that were firing at Israel. Indeed it's perhaps worth noting that the Iraqi SCUD was the only Iraqi system, the only one, which we underestimated before the war. We kept dropping bombs with essentially, as we learned later, zero effect because we couldn't find the targets. We finally put some brave men on the ground in western Iraq and they found SCUDs all right, but they weren't able to take them out--they weren't able to communicate with the pilots who were flying overhead.

The net effect was our campaign against SCUDs in the western desert may have disrupted the Iraqi ability to operate freely, but all we managed to take out was one decoy launcher.

In Afghanistan I think we saw something very different, something much more effective. We saw a remarkable combination of very brave U.S. Army and Air Force people on the ground, literally on horseback, taking 19th Century horse cavalry and using satellite communications to call in 50-year-old B-52 bombers--19th Century horse cavalry, mid-20th Century bombers, but a true 21st Century capability that literally transformed the battlefield and transformed the course of the war.

Some of you may recall that when a reporter asked Secretary Rumsfeld about his reintroduction of the horse cavalry into modern warfare he said, "It's all part of our transformation plan." [Laughter.] Indeed it is.

There are things that we don't categorize as transformational, but they're critical to making transformation work. I mentioned precision-guided munitions as one example. The whole backbone of command and control and communications in which we're investing some \$5 billion this year is pretty much critical to everything else. And our use of, for example, precision-guided munitions is going up almost exponentially. During the Gulf War some 3.5 percent of munitions we used were precision capable. In Kosovo the number was 33 percent. In Afghanistan the number is approaching 60 percent. In the next war almost surely the number will be even higher. That's why Pete Aldridge has put a lot of effort into making sure the production is higher as well, and I thank you for it.

A third critical category is countering the very determined efforts of those who want to keep us out of their operating areas through what we call anti-access strategies, by attacking our ships at sea or denying our bases or attacking our bases.

One of the answers to overcoming those strategies is long range precision strike. But we also need to reduce our dependence on predictable and vulnerable base structure by exploiting technologies that use stealthy platforms, that use UAVs, that can reduce the amount of logistical support needed by our ground forces.

Long range bombers and carrier-based aircraft perform the majority of air operations in land-locked Afghanistan, demonstrating the value of systems with very long ranges, with minimal reliance on foreign bases. Although I must add that we could not have conducted that operation if we hadn't been able to get access to two quite surprising countries, Uzbekistan and Pakistan.

There are, however, many places around the world where politics and geography may make it necessary to strike the enemy from the sea and/or from distant bases and indeed our ability to do so may often be the key to getting access to the bases we do need.

Fourth and very important is leveraging information technology. We're seeing some extremely exciting advances here and in this year's budget a substantial investment is being made in developing or trying to develop laser communications. If that effort is successful we'll be able with wide band satellites to pass data at speeds measured in gigabytes per second rather than megabytes, and the differences in what we can do would be dramatic--differences that would make it possible, for example, to truly transform the way we think about unmanned aerial vehicles. These different areas of transformation interact with one another even though we try to identify them with some specificity.

A fifth category is conducting effective information operations. We've been blessed so far, and I will knock on wood again, that we haven't been the victim of major cyber attacks during this campaign, but we know that that is something enemies will go after, particularly as they see us making increasingly effective use of our own information systems. We've got to be able to defend ours, and we need to be able to attack our enemy's.

Indeed it's perhaps no accident that this is still, I think, of all the six categories we're working on, the one that is most in its infancy.

Finally, we have to maintain unhindered access to space and protect the infrastructure that supports our critical space capabilities. Space has played a role in Afghanistan, but not a huge role. But, space is the ultimate high ground and its role in our operations will only continue to grow. So one of our goals is to harness our advantages in space so that we can see what our adversaries are doing around the world and around the clock.

We've seen in Afghanistan important applications particularly of those first three transformational goals. The last three are capabilities that haven't been particularly stressed in this campaign, but I believe if we ignore them we could be creating the conditions of a different kind of Pearl Harbor a decade or more from now.

Just a few minutes ago Dennis Picard was commenting to me about the way in which people are coming together, including people in your industry. And I think, I hope, that we're seeing the government and industry coming together, too, because that government/industry partnership has been vital to what we've been able to do and it's going to be vital to what we have to do in the future.

We know that meeting our transformational priorities rests on that partnership with industry and we also realize that government has to do its part to ensure that programs, policies and budgets contribute to a dynamic industrial base. We will continue to examine areas of greater efficiency. We will continue to examine initiatives that make it easier, and I know it's not easy to do business with your government.

We're also going to work to find the savings that are necessary to invest in transformation. As the Secretary has emphasized, the fact that we're at war cannot be allowed to become an excuse for paying for things that we don't need. On the contrary, very much the opposite. Because we're at war the imperative is even greater to cut things that we don't need and to hold the line on unnecessary increases.

Having said a bit about where I think we need to be going, let me just say a little bit about where we are in this current campaign. There are many unique features to this campaign. I suppose that's why we tend more often to call it a campaign than war. It's unique in the way it began, it's unique in the fact that we continue to be under threat at home, although sometimes people act as though it's all gone away. I think it's important to remember that that threat is still there and, indeed, if Richard Reid had been 30 seconds faster, we would have already lost a couple of hundred people in that one incident alone. Whoever is out there with the anthrax is still out there.

It is a campaign that is more complex and subtle than a conventional war. It's a campaign that is unique in the speed with which it came together. Indeed, I can't help commenting that if we had gone to the Congress in June last year and said we need an extra \$10 or \$20 billion in our budget as a contingency fund to fight a possible war in Afghanistan, I know what the reaction would have been: "You guys will do anything to defend increased defense spending." Even we didn't dream of that excuse.

Indeed, when the President ordered General Franks to start planning for a campaign in Afghanistan, I believe it was September 20th, it was 20 days later, less than three weeks, that they put together a plan. It was barely three weeks later when we started hearing commentary in the press that we were bogged down and getting nowhere. It was remarkable the speed with which that plan was put together. I guess it was remarkable the speed with which people began to second guess it. And it was also remarkable the speed with which it began to produce success.

But I would caution people that the success is only interim success. There is still a great deal more work to be done--in Afghanistan, where there are still dozens perhaps scores of al Qaida terrorists still at large, where we face a country that has been ravaged by 25 years of civil war and foreign occupation, where we have a great deal of work to do, and yet Afghanistan is only one of some 60 countries where al Qaida terrorists are burrowed in and our own country is one of them.

That means this war can't just be a war fought by the military or even primarily by the military. As

President Bush has said, we have to use every resource at our command, every means of diplomacy, every tool of intelligence, every instrument of law enforcement, every financial influence, and yes, every necessary weapon of war to destroy and defeat the global terror network.

Secretary Rumsfeld has emphasized from the beginning of this conflict the importance of trying to define what you're doing carefully and clearly ahead of time because how you set the conditions, how you establish your concepts is critical to how you proceed and I think critical to success. One day a few weeks ago he put together a list that I find a pretty impressive list of the concepts that have been at work, and I might just share a number of them with you.

One, perhaps the first one is that one that I just referred to from the quote from the President, that all elements of national power have got to be engaged in this effort. It is a broad-based effort and frequently we will find, for example, that our military success in Afghanistan has somehow marvelously produced improved cooperation with any number of countries when it comes to intelligence efforts to track down terrorists. And, of course, we in our military operations depend critically not just on what the intelligence community is coming up with but on what the Treasury Department is finding through its examination of financial networks.

A second key concept is that we are going to be leaning forward, as the Secretary puts it, not back. We're willing to put lives at risk. We've already lost enough Americans, we're not going to lose more by hesitating.

The third principle, we're not going to defeat terrorism by simply hunkering down. We can't possibly defend ourselves or protect against every conceivable, possible threat. We've got to go after the terrorists. Self defense requires preemption and prevention, not just law enforcement and retaliation.

It's going to be a long, hard and difficult campaign and, again, it's marvelous to have achieved the success that we've achieved so far in Afghanistan, but I do fear that perhaps the country hasn't quite absorbed that the conflict is very far from over.

As we move forward--and this is another concept the Secretary has emphasized, really from day one--we are engaged in coalition warfare, but it is not a single grand coalition of the kind that we assembled 10 years ago to liberate Kuwait. Rather, in the Secretary's terms, we are looking for flexible coalitions. For different missions it will be different coalitions. The countries that have been critical to our success in Afghanistan are not the same countries that are going to be critical now to success in the Philippines or to success in some other theater of the world. It's the mission that has determined the coalition, not the coalition determining the mission.

In Afghanistan itself, our strategy has been based, in considerable measure, on the fact that the Taliban regime terrorized its own people, and that was its Achilles heel. That is a quality that characterizes most of the states, indeed I think all of the states, that sponsor terrorism, and it is their weakness, and our allies in the fight against terrorism will very often be the very people of those countries that are terrorized by their own government.

In Afghanistan, we were mindful from the beginning of the history of foreign armies, whether it was the British in the 19th Century or the Soviets in the last century. That's the reason why, from the beginning, we tried to minimize our footprint, why we have emphasized that we're there as long as we're needed, but we are not there to own a piece of Afghanistan or to build permanent bases or to stay. It's a striking fact--one that the Secretary comments on sardonically every morning when we see the numbers--we now have more people, active duty and reservists, deployed in the State of Utah than in the country of Afghanistan today -- protecting the Olympics, obviously.

It's also a fact not often enough noted that there are more non-Americans deployed with the coalition forces and with the International Security Assistance Force in Kabul than we have Americans in Afghanistan today. Many of them are our NATO allies, prominently the UK and Canada and France, but Jordan is one of the largest contributors with, among other things, a military hospital in Mazar-e-Sharif that, to date, has treated some 12,000 individuals. The Spanish are setting up another hospital in Bagram. It has already in the first two days of operation treated more than 300 individual patients.

That is the last point to make: this is a battle for minds, or hearts and minds if you prefer. Our victory on the ground, I think, has already changed substantially the way in which this conflict is perceived, even in the Muslim world.

A point that I don't think we can stress often enough is that six times in the last ten years or so American forces have gone into harm's way in defense of Muslims in Kuwait, in defense of Kurdish Muslims in Northern Iraq, in defense of Muslims in Bosnia, and in defense of Muslims in Kosovo, in the defense earlier of Muslims in Somalia, and now in the defense of Muslims in Afghanistan. That's six times for populations that happened, and it is just happenstance, to be predominantly Muslim. But the idea that this is an attack on Afghanistan as opposed to an attack on the Taliban on behalf of Afghanistan is something that I think we've got to repeatedly rebut.

From the beginning, understanding that it would be a battle for hearts and minds, we made humanitarian operations a significant part of the effort from day one. Through the end of our air drops in December of last year, Central Command flew some 162 C-17 humanitarian sorties and dropped a total of 2.5 million individual rations. But more important than what we were able to do from the air, which in certain ways was a drop in the bucket, our victory set the conditions for humanitarian relief agencies to deliver now more than 52,000 tons of food supplies per month. The combined air drops and humanitarian relief efforts on the ground have converted a situation where, just a few months ago, the estimates were that between five and seven million people were getting less than half of their required food rations and we were facing an imminent humanitarian catastrophe to today where only in isolated parts of the country are people still at risk.

It is a great success and it is a success that not only has humanitarian implications, but I think is crucial for the long term support for this effort.

I'm told that everybody is quoting Churchill these days, but I would like to close with a quote from Churchill because there's one observation that I have gone back to several times since September 11th. It's what Churchill writes in his memoirs of World War II about his reaction about learning of the attack on Pearl Harbor. It may not surprise you that Churchill's reaction to the news was not one of sorrow for this attack, but actually great joy at the prospect of England being rescued.

He said, "I knew the United States was now in the war up to the neck, so we have won after all," he wrote. He wrote about "silly people, some here in England and others obviously in Germany who had discounted the force of the United States. Some said they were soft, others that the Americans would never be united, they would fool around at a distance, they would never come to grips, they couldn't stand the bloodletting. Their democracy and their system of recurrent elections," these people were saying, "would paralyze the war effort. The Americans would be just a vague blur on the horizon to friend or foe."

Mind you, this was December 8, 1941 that these words were written. "Now we would see" these people said, "the weakness of this numerous but remote, wealthy and talkative people." We haven't changed much in 60 years, have we? [Laughter.]

But Churchill said, "I had studied the American Civil War fought out to the last desperate inch. American blood flowed in my veins. I thought of a remark, which Edward Grey [the British Foreign Minister] had made to me more than 30 years before [as the United States entered World War I]." Grey had said that the United States was like "a gigantic boiler. Once the fire is lighted under it there is no limit to the power it can generate."

Indeed, there is no limit to the power that we can generate together. Brave and dedicated members of our armed forces and civil service united with the talented and dedicated members of industry. I'd like to thank you for the many ways in which you support our efforts and I look forward to a continued and strengthened partnership.

Thank you very much. [Applause.]

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