

NEW WORLD VISTAS
AIR AND SPACE POWER FOR THE
21ST CENTURY

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY VOLUME

This report is a forecast of a potential future for the Air Force. This forecast does not necessarily imply future officially sanctioned programs, planning or policy.

Dedication

Major Hubert B. Fisher, Jr.

This information technology report is dedicated to Bob Fisher, a technology warrior for the 21st century. On April 17, 1995, while enroute to a Scientific Advisory Board meeting, a C-21 aircraft carrying Major Fisher crashed. However, this report completes the efforts he placed in progress and hopefully, in his spirit, will maintain our technological preeminence and peace for the 21st century.

Prologue

Consulting the Experts

“It’s hard to predict, especially the future.”

(sometimes attributed to Neils Bohr)

“(Concerning) engines of war, the invention of which has long since reached its limit, and for the improvement of which I see no further hope in the applied arts...”

(Sextus Julius Frontius, Roman engineer writing in ancient times)

“The advancement of the arts, from year to year, taxes our credulity and seems to presage the arrival of that period when human improvement must end.”

(Henry L. Ellsworth, Patent Commissioner, in a 1843 report to Congress)

“Man’s flight through life is sustained by the power of his knowledge”

(engraved in marble at the United States Air Force Academy)

“In the development of air power, one has to look ahead and not backward and figure out what is going to happen, not too much of what has happened.”

(Billy Mitchell: Winged Defense, 1924)

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