Breaking Faith

“Pilots who don’t fly, maintainers who don’t maintain, air traffic controllers [who] don’t control—leave. ... An extended CR [continuing resolution] will also negate the pilot bonuses Congress authorized, which will ... break faith with the force. ... As a service Chief, I have many obligations, but one remains paramount: Every airman we send into harm’s way must be properly organized, trained, and equipped, and led to succeed in [his or her] mission. ... This is our moral obligation. A year-long CR makes meeting this obligation extremely difficult.” —Gen. David L. Goldfein, USAF Chief of Staff, remarks to Senate Armed Services Committee, April 5.

Naval Confusion

“We went from [a policy of] ‘Let’s not talk about gay people’ to complex conversations of gender identity and bathrooms. We leapfrogged 10 years of social growth in the Navy, and people from leadership all the way down to the deck plates did not know what to make of it.” —Retired Navy Capt. Rick Hoffman, Navy Times, Feb. 4.

Abracadabra ... Not

“So much of what [USAF] does is assumed capability, and the way I describe it is it’s like a light switch. ... I actually don’t know how lights work, ... but here’s what I know. I know that when I walk into this room, I flip that switch and those lights come on. ... Much of what we do as an Air Force has become a light switch. I don’t know how I got three bars on my GPS phone. It ... just happens. It’s magic.” —Lt. Col. Josh Koslov, commander of an EC-130H Compass Call electronic warfare squadron, quoted in airforcetimes.com, Feb. 6.

Message to Beijing

“Our long-standing policy on the Senkaku Islands stands. The US will continue to recognize Japanese administration of the islands and, as such, Article 5 [collective defense] of the US-Japan Security Treaty applies.” —Secretary of Defense James N. Mattis, joint press conference with Japanese Defense Minister Tomomi Inada, Feb. 4. The Senkakus are claimed by both Japan and China.

Hope for the Hollow

“The important thing to me is this [the Trump administration’s proposed increase in DOD spending] is a clear statement of recognition that we are heading towards a hollow force. There’s not just a readiness crisis. There’s enormous modernization challenges, and you have trouble maintaining [operational] tempo. That’s the textbook definition of a force that’s heading to hollow.” —James Jay Carafano, Heritage Foundation national security specialist, quoted in defensenews.com, Feb. 27.

Keep the Politics Out

“The oath we take, and we retake every time we are promoted, is to support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic. By design, we don’t pledge support to any particular party or any particular leader. We’re an apolitical military.” —Gen. David L. Goldfein, USAF Chief of Staff, remarks to reporters in Washington, D. C., Feb. 7.