

## Secretary lauds resourceful approach

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Air Force Print News

9/22/2003 - **WASHINGTON** -- Secretary of the Air Force Dr. James G. Roche used the Air Force Association's technology symposium Sept. 17 as a forum to praise Air Force ingenuity.

Roche compared today's leaders with those of the Army Air Corps, saying that integrating people and systems in new and innovative ways guarantees a great payoff in the service's investment in warfighting technologies.

"Throughout our comparatively short and distinguished history, we remain the best at what we do first and foremost because of our professional airmen," Roche said. "Air Force core competencies are the foundation that will ensure we are prepared for the unknown threat of an unknown future. They ensure our joint forces have the tools they need to maintain a broad and sustained advantage over any emerging adversaries."

Roche also said the Air Force must invest in education, training and leadership development.

"We need to prepare every member of our force -- officer, enlisted and civilian -- with experience, assignments and broadening that will allow them to succeed when we ask them to do the worthy work of our service," he said.

The secretary said that the B-1B Lancer bomber transformation served as an example of how bright people took a system, "played with it," and figured out ways to make good use of it -- much like the Army Air Corps devised ways to effectively use air power in the late 1930s.

"Transformation is changing how you think, not necessarily junking what you've got, but adapting what you have in new and innovative ways," Roche said.

Roche said leaders recognized that putting money into the B-1B weapon system to make innovative changes demonstrated its potential as a standoff platform.

"Getting that fuel bladder out of one of the bomb bays, learning to fly with the wings out straight, flying a little higher (and) a little slower provided a tremendous combat system," Roche said. "We then gave it to our airmen and they created a system of stacking planes with (weapons) loads that are available on-call. And we developed new doctrine, so we are in good shape in this field. We know what to do."



WASHINGTON (AFPN) -- Secretary of the Air Force Dr. James G. Roche addresses the audience during the Air Force Association's annual convention here. Included in the audience were more than 90 foreign air chiefs who are attending the Global Air Chief's Conference running concurrently with the AFA convention. (U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Jim Varhegyi)