

Tuttle

continued from page 1

other services are developing similar quick reaction forces.

He warned that in future conflicts, the logistics base might be the subject of enemy attacks, and he talked about the danger of asymmetric threats. "We define that as they don't get you where you are strong. They don't go up and try to shoot down your F-15s or they don't go tank against tank. They try to get you, as we found in Desert Storm, when the Iraqis dropped the Scud missiles on our reserve logistic forces, (where we had the most casualties) against our deploying sites, our ports and our airfields, and tried to use conventionally armed ballistic missiles, terrorism or bio weapons. They go for where we are not strong and look for our vulnerabilities. The ideas here is that you need a small footprint in this battle space."

Lessening the force protection requirement by establishing a small footprint is key for our logistics forces, but also carries some risks, according to Tuttle. "It does promote agility to allow us to move combat forces to move around easily, and you minimize the force protection requirements. The problem is how to do logistics support, and what are the consequences.

"During a deployment, you've got to manage the flow with the Time-Phased Force Deployment List and the sequencing of units from all services going into the battle space,"

continued Tuttle. "That is not easy as there are always changes such as in threats. The information to do that is a challenge."

For example, he said the automated information systems can make it easier, but a cargo load can still have changes at the last minute for a C-17 when it arrives.

"The other thing we need to do is to reduce the logistics forces going into that battle space," said Tuttle. "That means fewer shops, and that's why you need to peel back the backshops at the wings.

"You don't put stuff into the battlespace until it's needed," he said. "It's a concept that we've borrowed from industry called 'just in time.'"

"The sustainment piece (of logistics) is to keep it agile," said Tuttle.

"Use a small footprint to substitute information for stock piles. You see this in the stores now. For example, you go into Wal-Mart and you almost always see full shelves. It didn't get that way by accident. Shelves are stocked con-

tinuously using information systems since they are positioned and ready to go."

Tuttle cited the Desert Express missions during the Gulf War when the airlift system became a "just about in time" system where an aircraft part could be delivered to the customer in 24 to 36 hours. He added, that's the concept behind the kind of support that is wanted.

"You need to have asset visibility," said Tuttle. "You know where things are, and that costs money. We need to make sure the warfighter understand that, and without that, we can't get there from here."

Tuttle praised the logistics supply system for the C-17 and said that the flexible maintenance contract was needed at more bases since it allows

for better accountability and is faster. "We're paying through the nose for the depot-level supply systems. Why not go to an Internet-based system where the items are sent directly to you?"

"We have a huge catalyst for action," he continued. "We don't know what the threat is and the problems that an asymmetric fight can offer us. The challenge is how to plan for it. We've got to do it smart and manage the supply chain. Know what is going on commercially."

Tuttle concluded his remarks by saying, "Our Achilles heel is if we can't manage our capabilities well. You can't afford delays during the first few crucial weeks in a contingency if you want to affect its outcome quickly."



Photo by Lt. Col. Ed Memi
Retired Army Gen. William Tuttle, Jr., speaks to the Charleston Chapter of the National Defense Transportation Association, as Col. Rusty Findley, 437th Airlift Wing commander, looks on.