

General Moseley, USAF, Writes Letter to U.S. News and World Report

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As the commander of U.S. Central Command's air component for Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom, I read with interest your Aug. 11 article about the National Reconnaissance Office. The article leads one to assume the NRO is failing to deliver the critical intelligence capabilities to warfighters like me. Yet, from personal experience, I know that nothing could be further from the truth.

Operating over Afghanistan and Iraq, NRO and U.S. Air Force space systems provided coalition forces with a tremendous asymmetric intelligence advantage that allowed us to dominate the enemy quickly and completely in both fights. In the Iraqi campaign, I relied on NRO capabilities every day to conduct precise and effective strategic attack, counter-air and counter-land strikes against Saddam Hussein's regime. Moreover, NRO satellites were exceedingly capable supporting ground, naval, and special operations forces throughout the campaign.

And I'm not alone in my assessment of the importance of these systems. As my boss, General Tommy Franks, noted in Congressional testimony on Afghanistan, "the pieces of this operation which have been successful would not have been so without space-based assets. It's just very simply a fact."

If the performance of the NRO in combat operations can be construed as a failure, all I can say is, let's have more of them. And if your readers hear from those who have used these systems when they count - in war - they will draw an entirely different portrait of the NRO than that which appeared in your magazine.

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