

She had no prior interest in flying, she said, but “that was one of the things Kyle made sure to talk about when he was pitching me.”

“And I was like: ‘Yeah, I don’t have that kind of time. I have three kids,’” she said.

After changing her mind and getting her pilot’s license through the employee program, however, Ms. Vu began competing in aerial acrobatic competitions. As an engineer, she said, flying helps her address safety concerns. “If I’m building this, would I fly it?” said Ms. Vu, who said she considered herself a conservative pilot, although, she admits, “I was kind of surprised how much I enjoyed flying upside down.”

THE FUTURIST AND THE TEST PILOT

Is the world ready for wingless hovercraft levitating over cities and hotrodding through congested air corridors?

The consensus within the industry is that the F.A.A., which regulates half the world’s aviation activity, is several years from certifying urban air mobility.

“It’s a big burden of proof to bring new technology to the F.A.A.—appropriately so,” Mr. Clark said. Currently the certification process for a new plane or helicopter takes two to three years on average. For an entirely new type of vehicle, it could be considerably longer. (One conventionally powered aircraft that can take off and land without a runway had its first flight in 2003. It remains uncertified.)

Ms. Rothblatt has built a career out of the long view. She is a celebrated futurist who has argued passionately for transhumanism, or the belief that human beings will eventually merge with machines and upload consciousness to a digital realm. And she has taken positions on issues such as xenotransplantation—the interchange of organs between species, including humans—considered audacious not long ago, though no longer.

Yet in certain ways she and Mr. Clark make for unlikely partners. Mr. Clark has a familiar demeanor for a test pilot: exuberant, risk-taking, hyper-confident.

Ms. Rothblatt, on the other hand, calls herself an exceedingly cautious person, both as a pilot and in general. “I’m an adventurous thinker, but I’m cautious in everything,” she said. She brought up her life experience as an example. Aside from her accomplishments in medicine and aerospace, Ms. Rothblatt is known as a transgender pioneer; when she started Sirius XM and rose to prominence, she hadn’t yet transitioned. “When I changed my sex, it was only after watching presentations by a dozen top surgeons and I was absolutely confident that it would be safe,” she said.

The dichotomy between the futurist and the test pilot gets to a real issue facing any plane with a battery: Who will fly them?

According to Dan Patt, a technology analyst, vehicles like the one Beta is building are “very unlikely to make money unless they go unmanned.” Aviation in general faces a pilot shortage, and labor comprises up to a third of operating costs at legacy airlines.

The question for Beta as a business, said Mr. Patt, who led the development of drones for the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, is: “What does it take for their model to be competitive with ground transportation?”

Beta says its vehicles are designed to be “optionally manned” in the future. Yet analysts such as Mr. Patt see unpiloted commercial aviation as even farther from winning F.A.A. approval than the electric plane itself, raising a dilemma:

“What’s more important, going unmanned first, or do you build the vehicle first? Beta is clearly in the latter camp.”

Nathan Diller, an Air Force colonel, is not a futurist, but his job is to find and support companies doing forward-thinking, futuristic things.

The military applications of a vehicle like the Alia—especially logistics—have gotten attention at the highest levels of the Air Force, which has backed Beta and some of its peers through an accelerator called Agility Prime.

Last month, for the first time, uniformed Air Force pilots flew an Alia, soaring above Lake Champlain in a plane powered only by a battery.

Colonel Diller sees this kind of transport as a national security issue, in part because of its potential to reduce fuel consumption, but what seems to intrigue him most is “the democratization of air travel.”

He grew up flying experimental planes on an organic farm in West Texas, aware of the limits on where a plane can land and who can fly. Looking at a floating sculpture twirling above a lake, he sees a different future for aviation: “Everyone a pilot, everywhere a runway.”

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. REED. Mr. President, I was unavoidably absent for rollcall vote No. 200, the confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 857, Evelyn Padin, of New Jersey, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of New Jersey. Had I been present, I would have voted yea.

I was unavoidably absent for rollcall vote No. 201, the confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 915, Charlotte N. Sweeney, of Colorado, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Colorado. Had I been present, I would have voted yea.

I was unavoidably absent for rollcall vote No. 202, the motion to invoke cloture on Executive Calendar No. 806, Sandra L. Thompson, of Maryland, to be Director of the Federal Housing Finance Agency. Had I been present, I would have voted yea.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. HAWLEY. Mr. President, had there been a recorded vote, I would have voted no on S. Res. 134, a resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that the President should work with the Government of the United Kingdom to conclude negotiations for a comprehensive free trade agreement between the United States and United Kingdom.

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee’s intention to see that relevant informa-

tion is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD-423.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

DEFENSE SECURITY
COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA.

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 21-33 concerning the Army’s proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of Egypt for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$691 million. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

JAMES A. HURSCH,
Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 21-33

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of Egypt.

(ii) Total Estimated Value:

Major Defense Equipment* \$662 million.

Other \$29 million.

Total \$691 million.

Funding Source: Foreign Military Financing (FMF).

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE):

Five thousand (5,000) TOW 2A, Radio Frequency (RF) Missiles, BGM-71E-4B-RF.

Seventy (70) TOW 2A, Radio Frequency (RF) Missiles, BGM-71E-4B-RF (Fly-to-Buy Lot Acceptance Missiles).

Non-MDE:

Also included is missile support equipment; technical manuals/publications; spare parts; tool and test equipment; training; U.S. Government technical and logistical support, contractor technical support, and other associated equipment and services; and other related elements of logistical and program support.

(iv) Military Department: Army (EG-B-VJO).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: EG-B-VCO.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None known.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See Attached Annex.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: May 19, 2022.

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Egypt—TOW 2A Radio Frequency (RF) Missiles and Support

The Government of Egypt has requested to buy five thousand (5,000) TOW 2A, Radio Frequency (RF) missiles, BGM-71E-4B-RF; and seventy (70) TOW 2A, Radio Frequency (RF) missiles, BGM-71E-4B-RF (Fly-to-Buy Lot Acceptance missiles). Also included is missile support equipment; technical manuals/publications; spare parts; tool and test

equipment; training; U.S. Government technical and logistical support, contractor technical support, and other associated equipment and services; and other related elements of logistical and program support. The estimated total cost is \$691 million.

This proposed sale will support the foreign policy and national security of the United States by helping to improve the security of a Major Non-NATO Ally that continues to be an important strategic partner in the Middle East.

The proposed sale will enhance Egypt's capability to strengthen its homeland defense by replenishing its stocks. The missiles will be used for counter-terrorism and border security against armored threats and fortified positions. Egypt will have no difficulty absorbing these additional missiles into its armed forces.

The proposed sale of this equipment and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The principal contractor will be Raytheon Missiles & Defense, Tucson, AZ. There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale will not require the assignment of any additional U.S. Government or contractor representatives to Egypt.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 21-33

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. The Radio Frequency TOW 2A (RF) Missile (BGM-71-4B-RF) is a direct attack missile designed to defeat armored vehicles, reinforced urban structures, field fortification and other such targets. TOW Missiles are fired from a variety of TOW Launchers in the U.S. Army, USMC, and FMS partner forces. The TOW 2A RF missile can be launched from the same launcher platforms as the existing wire-guided TOW 2A missile without modification to the launcher. The TOW 2A missile (both wire and RF) contains two tracker beacons (Xenon and thermal) for the launcher to track and guide the missile in flight. Guidance commands from the launcher are provided to the missile by the RF link contained within the missile case.

2. The highest level of classification of defense articles, components, and services included in this potential sale is SECRET.

3. If a technologically advanced adversary were to obtain knowledge of the specific hardware and software elements, the information could be used to develop countermeasures that might reduce weapon system effectiveness or be used in the development of a system with similar or advanced capabilities.

4. A determination has been made that Egypt can provide substantially the same degree of protection for the sensitive technology being released as the U.S. Government. This sale is necessary in furtherance of the U.S. foreign policy and national security objectives outlined in the Policy Justification.

5. All defense articles and services listed in this transmittal have been authorized for release and export to the Government of Egypt.

NOTICE OF A TIE VOTE UNDER S. RES. 27

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to print the following letter in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. SENATE, COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS,

Washington, DC, May 25, 2022.

To the Secretary of the Senate:

PN1938, the nomination of Kalpana Kotagal, of Ohio, to be a Member of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, having been referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, the Committee, with a quorum present, has voted on the nomination as follows—

On the question of reporting the nomination without recommendation, 11 ayes to 11 noes.

In accordance with section 3, paragraph (1)(A) of S. Res. 27 of the 117th Congress, I hereby give notice that the Committee has not reported the nomination because of a tie vote, and ask that this notice be printed in the Record pursuant to the resolution.

PATTY MURRAY,

Chair.

CONFIRMATION OF BRIDGET A. BRINK

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, I opposed the confirmation of Bridget Brink to be U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine because of her support for the expansion of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, NATO. Ambassador Brink believes in expanding NATO to any country who would like to join, including Ukraine.

An important part of diplomacy is understanding your adversary. When I questioned Ambassador Brink about the eastern expansion of NATO, however, she expressed her belief that Russian President Vladimir Putin merely uses the NATO question as a pretext for actions he would take anyway. I strongly disagree. We must evaluate our leaders' actions, as well as the actions of our adversaries, on the world stage.

Putin is an aggressor and must be condemned, but we cannot allow our revulsion for his invasions to blind us to the fact that our adversaries react to the actions of the West. For years, Putin stated that any attempt to expand NATO to Russia's borders would be perceived as a direct threat. Fifteen years ago, Putin asked, "Against whom is this expansion intended?" Yet, a year later in 2008, NATO promised that Ukraine and Georgia would one day join the alliance. Russia's invasions of Georgia and Ukraine are not a coincidence, but I left my meeting with Ambassador Brink believing that she is not willing to reflect upon the actions of the West and how they would be viewed by Russian eyes.

Putin has no justification for embarking on a war and invading another country. I fully support the Ukrainians in their fight against Russia. Russia's brutal use of its military to achieve its objectives is unacceptable. But we must understand the reasons why he chose to invade in the first place.

When the Cold War ended, the United States had the benefit of the wisdom of foreign policy officials who took Rus-

sia seriously. George Kennan warned that NATO expansion would ignite a new cold war. Henry Kissinger proposed a peaceful coexistence in which Ukraine pursued a policy of neutrality, with one foot in the West and one foot in the East. Jack Matlock, our Ambassador to the Soviet Union from 1987 to 1991, called the current crisis "predictable" and, in 1997, warned Congress that he believed that NATO expansion "could well encourage a chain of events that could produce the most serious security threat to this nation since the Soviet Union collapsed."

Those wise voices are either gone or retired. Had we listened to their warnings, today's crisis might have been averted. But the State Department is now filled with officials who refuse to listen to adversaries or consider how our actions may make peace more difficult to obtain.

Although I opposed the confirmation of Bridget Brink to be Ambassador to Ukraine, I wish her luck in representing the United States and finding a path to a peaceful end to the conflict.

TRIBUTE TO CRAIG MCLEAN

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I rise today to acknowledge the public service of Craig McLean who retired in April after a distinguished 40-year career within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, NOAA. Within NOAA, Mr. McLean was as a dedicated leader, advocating for science to advance NOAA's mission to understand and predict changes in climate, weather, ocean, and coasts.

Mr. McLean has a deep dedication to our oceans and waterways, garnered from growing up along the Passaic River in Rutherford, NJ. As a child, he took a small boat out on the Passaic. As a teenager, he learned to dive and performed decompression diving in order to explore deep-ocean shipwrecks. These experiences helped inspire his career.

Mr. McLean began his NOAA career in 1981 as a uniformed officer in the NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps and served for nearly 25 years before retiring at the rank of captain. During that time, he was instrumental to the founding of the NOAA Office of Ocean Exploration and Research, OER. Later, during his 16 years as a Federal executive, he provided continued leadership in driving forward mapping of U.S. waters to advance oceanographic scientific knowledge and discover deep ocean secrets including new species, historical shipwrecks, and undersea mountains. His leadership underlies OER's astounding accomplishments including mapping 2 million square kilometers and collecting ocean data in the waters of 16 countries and the high seas. This work contributed to key conservation decisions for vital marine habitats.

Most recently, Mr. McLean served as Assistant Administrator for NOAA's Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research—OAR—for more than 6 years,