Air Force aircraft actually procured in the years FY51 and FY56 compared to the number expected to be procured in FY83 and FY86. These years were chosen because of the nearly identical constant dollar sizes of the procurement budgets in FY51 and FY86, on the one hand, and in FY56 and FY83, on the other.

You can see the enormous decline in the number of planes we can afford today for the same money as we paid in the '50s. I understand this chart has come to be called in some Pentagon circles "the pimple chart," since the quantities projected in both FY83 and FY86 look about like a pimple compared to the FY51 and FY56 figures.

It goes without saying that the relative capabilities of aircraft today versus those of the '50s are not depicted. What is indicated is the basic cause of our force structure decline over the years, and much of the reason why it is becoming increasingly difficult to enlarge the forces with even considerable real dollar increases in the defense budget. For example, the Air Force increased its budget for its tactical air forces by an annual average of over 10% in real terms in the years FY73 to FY80. Yet its fighter/attack inventory increased by only about 200 planes -- and this was due to high production rates of the two relatively low-cost aircraft, the A-10 and F-16.

The other, more insidious, aspect of the cost problem is what might be called the dynamic fact of cost growth. No matter what the estimates of costs have been, costs historically have lept beyond those estimates. Obviously, they have at the same time lept beyond budget levels, which are premised on the cost estimates. It is equally clear that cost growth has led