

The Strategic Imbalance

"The imbalance between our readiness for future global missions and the wars we are fighting today limits our capacity to respond to future contingencies and offers potential adversaries, both state and non-state, incentives to act. We must not allow the challenges of today to keep us from being prepared for the realities of tomorrow."—**Adm. Michael G. Mullen, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Senate Appropriations defense subcommittee, May 20.**

On Watch for Watchers

"Yesterday, while voting on the war supplemental spending bill in the House of Representatives, I couldn't help but notice a contingent of approximately 20 flag rank Army officers sitting ... watching the debate and vote for a couple of hours. ... At a time when our nation is at war, our troops are overextended, and the Administration is literally asking for emergency military spending, what good to the 'war on terror' is having US generals and other top ranked officers—who were likely accompanied by staff and escorted by their chauffeurs—spending hours sitting in the gallery of the House of Representatives?"—**Rep. Pete Stark (D-Calif.) in an irate letter to Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates May 16 about observers who turned out to be a class from the Army War College.**

The Changing Force

"And you'll see the impact of these changes in your own Air Force careers. Instead of serving at 10,000 feet, some of you will serve on the ground as battlefield airmen—deploying behind enemy lines and using laser technology to fix targets for aviators circling above. Instead of sitting in jet fighter cockpits, some of you will sit before computer consoles ... here in the United States, where you'll guide Predator UAVs half a world away and use them to strike terrorist hideouts. These and other changes will increase your ability to prevail in asymmetric warfare. They will make you more effective in the defense of freedom."—**President Bush, Air Force Academy commencement, May 28.**

The Long Decline

"The Air Force has been in a long, gradual decline since the Cold War ended. First, the nuclear deterrence mission disappeared. Then it was unable to modernize its air fleet. And finally it couldn't connect with the Bush Administration's vision of military transformation."—**Loren B. Thompson, Lexington Institute, New York Times, June 10.**

Carter's Count

"The US has more than 12,000 nuclear weapons, the Soviet Union has about the same, Great Britain and France have several hundred, and Israel has 150 or more."—**Former President Jimmy Carter, in the first-ever public acknowledgment by any US President of Israeli nuclear weapons, Reuters, May 27.**

Al Qaeda's Setbacks

"On balance, we are doing pretty well. Near strategic defeat of al Qaeda in Iraq. Near strategic defeat for al Qaeda in Saudi Arabia. Significant setbacks for al Qaeda globally—and here I'm going to use the word 'ideologically,' as a lot of the Islamic world pushes back on their form of Islam."—**CIA Director Michael V. Hayden, Washington Post, May 30.**

Endgame in Sight

"We are now seeing what the endgame in Iraq looks like—with our forces drawing down over time, in a series of very complex battlefield rearrangements that slowly cede more responsibility for day-to-day security operations to the Iraqis."—**Gates, Wall Street Journal, May 21.**

Ground Force Buildup

"Regardless of the number of troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, we will need a total active land force of something like one million soldiers and marines. ... Those who believe that the need for such a force size will abate as troops are drawn down in Iraq should consider the larger pattern of American operations over the past generation. Since its creation in 1983, the US Central Command, which is responsible for operations in East Africa, the Middle

East, and Central Asia has demanded an ever-increasing American presence, a presence which has changed from being largely air and maritime to boots on the ground."—**Thomas Donnelly and Frederick W. Kagan, authors of Ground Truth: The Future of US Land Power (AEI Press), Wall Street Journal, May 23.**

The Credibility of Deterrence

"Any senior official who diminishes in any way the perception that the US might use nuclear weapons, effectively denuclearizes us. It amounts to unilateral arms control by fiat."—**Air Force Col. Tom Ehrhard (Ret.), nuclear strategist and former ICBM launch control officer, National Journal, May 24.**

Time to Reconsider

"Certainly there are a very large number of gay and lesbian men and women serving honorably in our military today. And they're doing it within the existing law. I'm not advocating anything—except I'm saying the policy was the right policy for the right time, and times change. It's appropriate to take another look."—**Former Sen. Sam Nunn, a key leader in adoption of the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy in 1993, Atlanta Journal-Constitution, June 3.**

Innocence in Cyberspace

"If the US is defending itself against an attack that originates from a computer which was co-opted by an attacker, then there are real questions about whether the owner of that computer is truly innocent. At the least, the owner may be culpably negligent, and that does not, in fairness or law, prevent America from defending itself if the harm is sufficiently grave."—**Col. Charles W. Williamson III, Air Force staff judge advocate, Armed Forces Journal, May.**

Bigger Bullets

"If you hit a guy in the right spot, it doesn't matter what you shoot him with."—**Maj. Thomas Henthorn, chief of small-arms division at Army infantry school at Ft. Benning, Ga., on proposals for larger caliber bullets for M-4 and M-16 rifles, Associated Press, May 27.**