

The Washington Post

A weak spot in our defenses

Congressional computers have been penetrated, probably by the Chinese. The avionics system of the F-22 fighter may be compromised. Computers of our presidential candidates were hacked into -- and probably not by teenagers on a lark. Last year's advance of Russian tanks into Georgia was accompanied by the disruption of Georgian government computer systems

Another detainee debacle

Abdulrahim Abdul Razak Al Gincio traveled to Afghanistan in 2000 and spent several days in a guest house used by Taliban and al-Qaeda operatives before setting off for an al-Qaeda training camp. The Syrian citizen, who now uses the surname Janko, claims that he was taken to the camp against his will. After three weeks there, al-Qaeda leaders suspected him of being a U.S. spy; Mr. Janko, the U.S. government acknowledges, was tortured for three months before falsely confessing to the charge. Mr. Janko was then imprisoned by the Taliban for 18 months in the notorious Sarposa prison in Kandahar.

The Guardian

Cyber armies are gearing up in the cold war of the web

The age of cyber innocence is over. Not only has the British government finally published its national cyber security strategy. But Robert Gates, the US secretary of defence, has announced a cyber defence command under a four-star general at the Pentagon. The stage is set for Nato to engage in the cold war of the web, along with Russia, China, India and Israel.

Insufficient force in Afghanistan

British forces are now out of Iraq and defence chiefs can concentrate on Afghanistan. This week they are taking part in one of their largest operations against the Taliban in Helmand province with the backing of US air power. Today, General Sir Richard Dannatt, the head of the army, warned that not only defence chiefs but also the entire government must learn from the mistakes of Iraq and apply them to Afghanistan.

Afghanistan: a changing war

A new American commander has taken over in Afghanistan, determined to prosecute the war more effectively while setting his face against the excessive use of air power. As part of a summer offensive designed to secure the countryside so that Afghans can vote in the coming

presidential elections, coalition troops are on the move, men of Britain's Black Watch regiment yesterday taking a Taliban stronghold in Helmand. Across the border, Pakistani troops are heading out from their recent battles in Swat to close with Taliban forces in South Waziristan. Is there something going on in this complex theatre of war that could lead to an outcome we might ultimately be able to describe as a success, even a victory?

Obama must call off this folly before Afghanistan becomes his Vietnam

If good intentions ever paved a road to hell, they are doing so in Afghanistan. History rarely declares when folly turns to disaster, but it does so now. Barack Obama and his amanuensis, Gordon Brown, are uncannily repeating the route taken by American leaders in Vietnam from 1963 to 1975. Galbraith once said that the best thing about the Great Depression was that it warned against another. Does the same apply to Vietnam?

Foreign Affairs

Globalization in retreat

It is now clear that the global economic crisis will be deep and prolonged and that it will have far-reaching geopolitical consequences. The long movement toward market liberalization has stopped, and a new period of state intervention, reregulation, and creeping protectionism has begun.

Flipping the Taliban

The deployment of more U.S. troops to Afghanistan is necessary to tip the balance of power against the Taliban. But this military "surge" must be accompanied with a political one designed to persuade insurgents to give up their fight.

The Independent

Realism makes a welcome return to US foreign policy

The real surprise is that it has taken so long. After five months, President Barack Obama's foreign policy is now under assault, from both left and right. For some liberals, he is little more than Bush-lite. US troops are still in Iraq, they complain, and even more of them are being despatched to fight America's other war in Afghanistan. Guantanamo Bay is still open, complete with revamped military tribunals.

The Times

The Army can't soldier on without more men

British troops in southern Afghanistan are at present counter-attacking one of the most serious Taleban offensives for some time. Operation Panther's Claw is one of the largest air-mobile operations mounted in this region and includes more than 3,000 troops, spearheaded by

soldiers from, among other units, the Royal Regiment of Scotland and 2 Mercian.

The Telegraph

Big guns don't win today's wars

The nature of modern conflict means our Armed Forces urgently need a major overhaul. Thomas Harding anticipates a battle in which the Army must triumph.