The New York Times

The Cairo Speech
When President Bush spoke in the months and years after Sept. 11, 2001, we often — chillingly — felt as if we didn't recognize the United States. His vision was of a country racked with fear and bent on vengeance, one that imposed invidious choices on the world and on itself. When we listened to President Obama speak in Cairo on Thursday, we recognized the United States.

Measuring Success in Afghanistan
Lt. Gen. Stanley McChrystal, President Obama's choice to be the next military commander in Afghanistan, has defined America's essential goals there in a way that represents an overdue change in military strategy. He told senators last week that "the measure of effectiveness will not be the number of enemy killed. It will be the number of Afghans shielded from violence."

North Korea Throws Down the Gauntlet

The Obama administration has so far dealt publicly with the North Korean challenge in an understated, almost leisurely, manner. Emphasizing continued reliance on multilateral diplomacy, it has invited Pyongyang to return to the conference table, even while North Korea threatens military action and tests nuclear weapons and the missiles to deliver them — in the face of a declaration by all the major world powers that such actions are "unacceptable."

The Washington Post

Hold and Build: How to make sure a Pakistani offensive against the Taliban does not go to waste

It's been hardly more than a month since Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton warned that Pakistan's government was "abdicating to the Taliban" even as senior American officials scrambled to persuade that government and its army to take on the extremists. The administration got its wish: Since May 7 the army has been engaged in a concerted offensive to recapture the Swat Valley, along with neighboring areas. Over the weekend it claimed to have cleared the region's capital, Mingora, and to have killed more than 1,200 militants. Though the army's claim that it would finish the job within a few more days sounded dubious, U.S. military and intelligence officials told The Post's Karen DeYoung that the offensive had delivered a setback to the Taliban and, along with U.S. airstrikes, undermined the security of al-Qaeda's nearby sanctuaries.

D-Day Plus 65

Early on in the Normandy invasion, time was denominated day by agonizing day as the

Americans and British and their allies pushed into France, fighting every step of the way: D-Day plus one, D-Day plus two . . . . advancing inch by inch, it seemed. Now it's counted in years -- 65 of them as of today, a full working lifetime for anyone born around June 6, 1944.

The Guardian

D-day anniversary: Britain's good war

The allied invasion of occupied France which began on the Normandy beaches in the grey light of dawn 65 years ago today was not the turning point of world war two. That accolade belongs to the battlefield exploits of the Red Army, which also bore the brunt of the conflict for longer and killed four times as many German soldiers as the rest of the allies put together. Nevertheless, D-day was seen at the time, and has rightly been seen ever since, as a defining moment in the war and in shaping the postwar world. For this country, D-day has also become pivotal in the most potent of our modern national stories - the moment when the four-year threat of German invasion was finally turned away, when the liberation of western Europe could begin and when the possibility of the return to peacetime began to take shape.

Obama's speech in Cairo: a bold vision

Barack Obama had set the bar high: to deliver a speech which addressed America's dysfunctional relationship not just with the Arab world but the Muslim one; a speech which encompassed not only contemporary conflicts but past ones; a speech which would not only restate common values but redefine them in terms of Islamic teaching and the Qur'an. He succeeded spectacularly in Cairo yesterday. Given the mine-strewn nature of the terrain on which he was venturing, Mr Obama displayed a mastery of touch. And he achieved his aims without side-stepping key issues or keeping to the safety of rhetorical high ground.

The Times

America and Islam

Few speeches have been as eagerly awaited in the Middle East as President Obama's address in Cairo University to the Muslim world. And few speeches have been as carefully crafted, as powerfully delivered or as comprehensive in charting a new beginning between civilisations locked for the past decade in destructive mutual incomprehension. If the President's promises could be delivered, if his aspirations could be achieved and if his respectful tone could be adopted across the region, many of the toxic issues roiling the Middle East might become less intractable.

Barack Obama is blind to his blunders over Islam

For the past week or so, the Middle East has been abuzz with speculation about Barack Obama's "historic address to the Muslim world" to be delivered in Cairo on Thursday. During his presidential campaign, Obama had promised to make such a move within his first 100 days at the White House.

Wall Street Journal

Europe Forgets Tiananmen

It is now 20 years since democracy protestors occupied Tiananmen Square. China's non-violent movement wanted "more democracy and less corruption" from the Communist Party that had begun the process of economic modernization but still resisted political reform. While the Europe "whole and free" to which U.S. President George H.W. Bush aspired in May 1989 votes freely this week in elections for the European Parliament, the hopes of a democratic China remain unfulfilled. The European Union can, and must, do more.

The Economist

Tell it straight

Barak Obama's biggest bonus on his first presidential trip to Arab parts of the Middle East was not being George Bush. Many Arabs in the region, as well as Turks and Persians, are rightly ready to give him a chance to restore his country's tattered reputation. So his honeyed words, delivered from a font of Islamic learning in Cairo, will have helped him, at least a bit, in that arduous task. But they will not have drawn all the poison of the past eight years, when many of the world's 1.4 billion Muslims came to believe, erroneously if understandably, that America was their enemy. Mr Obama's ringing oratory, which drew waves of applause and a rousing ovation, will soon be forgotten unless it is followed by deeds.

New Statesman

Can Obama woo the Muslim world?

Ever since the attacks of 11 September 2001, Muslims whom I know, both in Britain and abroad, have taken an almost morbid pleasure in telling one particular joke about George Bush and Tony Blair. It seems that the two leaders are sitting at a White House dinner, whispering to one another in the corner, when a diplomat from a friendly nation walks over to them and asks what they are discussing.