

New York Times  
The Vietnam War We Ignore  
As President Obama and his advisers contemplate a new course for Afghanistan, many commentators are suggesting analogies with earlier conflicts, particularly the war in Vietnam. Such comparisons can be useful, but only if the characterizations of earlier wars are accurate and lessons are appropriately applied.

How Generals Should Talk to Presidents  
In a recent speech in London, Gen. Stanley A. McChrystal, the top United States commander in Afghanistan, was blunt. Calling the military situation there "deteriorating," he warned that the United States was going to have to "do things dramatically and even uncomfortably differently."

The Washington Post  
The slowly vanishing NATO  
"This is a solemn moment for this House and our country," Gordon Brown, the British prime minister, said while addressing the House of Commons last week. A hush fell over the room and, according to a parliamentary sketch writer, the members "ceased to fidget, a truly rare thing in the Commons." Brown then began to read a list of names: the 37 British soldiers who died in Afghanistan over the summer.

Europe's angst over Afghanistan  
As the president and his National Security Council privately debate whether to send tens of thousands of troops to war, America's European allies watch with a mixture of anxiety and anguish. They know that if the deployment goes forward, they will be asked to make their own difficult and politically costly contributions of soldiers or other personnel. But they are, if anything, even more worried that the American president will choose a feckless strategy for what they consider a critical mission.

The Taliban Threat  
During the past 10 days, Pakistan's conflict with the Taliban movement has escalated toward full-scale war -- and the extreme Islamist movement has mostly held the initiative. On Tuesday, government warplanes bombed targets in the Taliban stronghold of South Waziristan in what may be the prelude to a major army offensive there.

The Economist  
Obama's war  
Eight years after the deceptively swift toppling of the Taliban, the prospects for the NATO-led mission in Afghanistan seem worse than ever. Every Western casualty, every reinforcement and every pious political homily on the "justness" and "necessity" of the war seem only to leave the mission floundering deeper and more hopelessly. Already battered by mounting casualties, Western support for the war has been further dented by an Afghan presidential election in August, wildly rigged in favour of the incumbent, Hamid Karzai.

The Guardian  
Pakistan: A fight to the finish  
The Pakistan army is taking a beating for its summer offensive in Swat and the drone attack which killed Baitullah Mehsud, the leader of the Pakistani Taliban. Not only is Baitullah's successor Hakimullah very much alive (the army claimed he had been killed in a shoot-out with a rival over the succession) but his organisation has shown in the last 11 days that it can orchestrate mayhem throughout the Punjab.

Be bold, Obama. Resist the hawks crying one-last-push  
The endgame begins. London waits on Washington. Washington waits on Barack Obama. Obama waits on Kabul. Kabul waits on history. The clarion of military bravura in Afghanistan sounds an ever more uncertain note. It is obvious that this war is starting to stink, but no one dares say so. Everyone waits. Hillary Clinton even takes time off for diplomacy's favourite round of golf, telling Irishmen or Palestinians how to behave themselves.

The Telegraph  
The battle for 'terror central' in Pakistan  
Pity poor Pakistan. As I write, 30,000 of its troops are advancing ever further into one of its fiercely independent tribal areas to kill thousands of their own countrymen many of them don't want to fight, in a war they cannot win. But their preferences or prospects no longer matter: the Taliban and their allies in the al-Qaeda and Kashmiri jihadist groups throughout the country have taken the war to them.

Make

Britain safer - pull our troops out of Afghanistan  
Having been fed so many lies by a discredited Government ♦ weapons of mass destruction, immigration numbers, education standards, the Lisbon Treaty, boom and bust ♦ we risk a collapse into "falsehood fatigue". This is the point at which, says comedienne Lily Tomlin, our accelerating cynicism fails to match strides with official mendacity. We simply can't keep up.  
The Times  
Yes, the Taliban are being thumped but . . .  
. . . Pakistan's offensive is against home-grown insurgents, not the Afghan Taliban who hide in its borders. The Pakistani Government and Army have finally decided to heed the words of a former ruler: "No patchwork scheme ♦ and all our recent schemes, blockades, allowances etc are mere patchwork ♦ will settle the Waziristan problem. Not until the military steamroller has passed over the country from end to end will there be peace."  
Barack Obama is out of step on gays in the military  
Among all the promises of change that swept Barack Obama to power, none seemed more simple, symbolic or easier to implement than his pledge to permit openly gay men and women to serve in America's Armed Forces.