

New York Times
\$1.75 Billion boondoggle
An unlikely alliance of senators led by Saxby Chambliss of Georgia and including Edward Kennedy and John Kerry of Massachusetts and Joseph Lieberman of Connecticut is backing an indefensible defense budget boondoggle: the wasting of \$1.75 billion on seven additional F-22 fighter jets that the Pentagon says it neither wants nor needs.

Secretary Clinton goes to India
The Bush administration and Congress rewrote American and international rules to allow India a longtime nuclear scofflaw to buy fuel and technology for its civilian nuclear program. It was supposed to be the start of a beautiful new friendship. So we are eager to see what happens when Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton visits India over the next few days.

The 0s and 1s of computer warfare
Judging by the response to a recent wave of cyberattacks that hit two dozen important Web sites in the United States and South Korea, we are already in the Brave New World of cyberwarfare. After all, what could be more disturbing than to find that someone anyone, actually, since the attacks relied on very unsophisticated technology could disrupt the Web infrastructure of two very powerful nations?

New Statesman
Make no mistake, this imperial war in Afghanistan cannot be won
In March 2006, only five British service personnel had been killed in Afghanistan during the previous five years of conflict. This was before British troops were deployed to Helmand Province by the then defence secretary, John Reid, who hoped that their mission could be completed "without a shot being fired". Today, the death toll stands at 184, and has surpassed the number of our personnel killed in the occupation of Iraq.

Washington Post
A letter from Europe
Twenty years have passed since the revolutions that restored freedom to what had been the captive nations of Central and Eastern Europe. That many Americans no longer give much thought to that part of the world testifies, in part, to the region's success. The eastward expansion of NATO and the European Union helped bring security, stability and growing prosperity; more important, the countries themselves have nurtured democratic and free-market institutions that in 1989 would have seemed unreachable.

No more F-22s
F-22 fighter jets have posed problems from the start. They were designed in the 1980s to combat a force of advanced Soviet fighter jets that never materialized. Decades of testing and tweaking have revealed fundamental flaws in their material and structure. They cost more than \$44,000 for each hour they spend in the air -- more than their predecessor, the F-15. They have never flown over Iraq or Afghanistan. The Defense Department has said it wants to cap the force at 187 and focus on next-generation F-35s instead.

The Guardian
How many more will die in vain before we withdraw?
All week politicians, media and the military have strained every nerve to turn public sympathy over the deaths of British squaddies into support for the US-led occupation of Afghanistan. After a year of parades, a new Armed Forces Day and a stream of censored reports of derring-do from the frontline, the killing of 15 soldiers in 10 days has triggered a barrage of war propaganda.

The Economist
Hold your nerve
Afghanistan is said to be the graveyard of empires. The British army came to grief there in the 19th century, the Soviet one in the 20th. Such was Afghans' reputation for ferocity that Rudyard Kipling told those left wounded on Afghanistan's plains: "Jest roll to your rifle and blow out your brains."

Financial Times
Why the world needs a United Nations army
Ronald Reagan once asked Mikhail Gorbachev to imagine that there was "suddenly a threat to this world from some other species, from another planet". The late American president speculated that this would ensure "we would forget all the little local differences that we have between our countries".

The Independent
The

British admire their Army ♦ but they don't understand it

There is a paradox. The modern British public has never admired its armed forces more, or understood them less. The incomprehension has been reinforced by social and cultural changes. In the first place, personal contact with the services is increasingly rare. You would need to be well over 80 to have fought in the last War, while the youngest former national servicemen are approaching their 70th birthdays ♦ and since the IRA, off-duty soldiers have rarely worn their uniforms.

Spectator

For answers to the Afghan-Pakistan conflict, ask: what would Curzon do?

Britain's eyes this week are on southern Afghanistan. US Marines have doubled Coalition troop numbers in Helmand and are moving to clear Taleban base areas as part of Operation Khanjar. A major British offensive is also underway: Operation Panchai Palang, an effort to extend Coalition control along the Helmand River valley, one month ahead of the Afghan presidential elections currently scheduled for 20 August.

The Telegraph

We have a moral duty to our troops: pay up or pull them out

On the day that Gordon Brown swept into Downing Street as Prime Minister, June 27 2007, he addressed the country: "This will be a new Government with new priorities." So much has happened since then that it is often difficult to recall precisely which of the old priorities he found so inappropriate.</p>