

By John T. Correll, Contributing Editor

It Sells in Washington ...

"The Pentagon junta pretends that the devastation of Afghanistan by our high-flying Air Force has been a great victory (no one mentions that the Afghans were not an American enemy—it was like destroying Palermo in order to eliminate the Mafia). In any case, we may never know what, if anything, was won or lost (other than much of the Bill of Rights)."—*Gore Vidal in Perpetual War for Perpetual Peace, which made the Washington Post best-sellers list in May and June.*

... Where Taste Is Strange

"Gore Vidal is the master essayist of our age."—*Washington Post, quoted in news release from Thunder's Mouth Press touting Perpetual War for Perpetual Peace, April 2002.*

Ted Turner's Philosophy of Terror

"The Palestinians are fighting with human suicide bombers—that's all they have. The Israelis ... they've got one of the most powerful military machines in the world. The Palestinians have nothing. So who are the terrorists? I would make a case that both sides are involved in terrorism."—*Ted Turner, vice chairman of AOL Time Warner and founder of CNN, quoted in London's Guardian Unlimited, June 17.*

Relax

"The Dirt on Dirty Bombs: They're Not That Bad."—*Headline in Long Island Newsday, June 19.*

They Saw Fecklessness

"Prince Turki ... said the Saudi monarchy had long believed [Saddam] Hussein could be ousted with an internal coup, US air support, and diplomatic measures to keep neighbors such as Iran and Turkey out of the fray. But he said the kingdom lost faith in US efforts to oust Mr. Hussein after a failed coup attempt in 1996 and an inconclusive series of US and British air strikes in 1998. As early as 1999, Prince Turki said, King Fahd refused point-blank to discuss Iraq when US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright asked him about it. 'He was expressing his total disbelief that America was serious that they would do some-

thing to get rid of Saddam Hussein,' he said. 'From 1991 [onward], we were talking with the Americans on ways of getting rid of Saddam Hussein, always making propositions to them which we received from inside [Iraq ... but we got] no response, only more talk about gathering intelligence, about identifying potential leaders, etc.'"—*July 29 Wall Street Journal article, based on interview with Prince Turki al-Faisal, who for nearly 30 years was the chief of Saudi foreign intelligence.*

More Noble Than Defense

"Proposals for the swift creation of a new Department of Homeland Security have given fresh energy to the idea of a Cabinet-level Department of Peace. And why not? If we have Cabinet-level departments organized around fighting wars across the globe and fighting terrorism at home, why not have a department organized around the idea of promoting, seeking, and creating peace?"—*Honolulu Advertiser, June 16.*

We're at War?

"Everyday life has pretty much returned to being everyday life. The inconvenience the everyday citizen experiences, the expectations of sacrifice, are clearly minimal. To the extent there's a war on, it's a war in which the American people are not engaged."—*Andrew Bacevich, defense commentator and Boston University faculty member, USA Today, June 18.*

Terror Is Technique

"Terrorism is a technique, a tactic. You can't wage war on a technique."—*Zbigniew Brzezinski, national security advisor in the Carter Administration, Newhouse News Service, June 19.*

Diversity at Sea

"The Navy has the hardest transformation challenge of all, because it is really four services—submariners, aviators, surface warriors, and Marines—masquerading as a single military department."—*Loren Thompson, Lexington Institute analyst, Defense News, July 1–7.*

Spread It Around

"It would be a good idea if we knew before it happened any Defense Department-related entity that plans to build or lease within 100 miles of Washington, D.C. ... Concentration of Defense Department activities in a single area is probably not a smart idea."—*Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld, interview with Washington Times, June 27.*

The Last Are First

"The last ones in with both a service and a school are, in the modern age, the first ones in during wartime."—*The Power and the Glory: An Illustrated History of the United States Military, April 29, on USAF and the Air Force Academy.*

Doctrine and Tyranny

"The Bush doctrine, which he announced at a Republican fund-raiser last weekend, is that the United States will take 'pre-emptive' action against states and groups that could pose a threat to us. This is the first example in history of a democratic nation conferring on itself the right to attack those nations it may perceive itself to be threatened by. Tyrannies have often done such things, but that is what makes them tyrannies. ... 'Pre-emptive' warfare is a risky concept because it puts you in the business of causing a conflict that otherwise might not occur."—*James O. Goldsborough, San Diego Union-Tribune, June 20.*

JFK Said No

"A pre-emptive strike is usually sold to the President as a 'surgical' air strike; there is no such thing. So many bombings are required that widespread devastation, chaos, and war unavoidably follow. The trouble with a pre-emptive strike doctrine is that it pre-empts the President's own choices. Yes, Kennedy 'thought about' a pre-emptive strike; but he forcefully rejected it, as would any thoughtful American President or citizen."—*Ted Sorenson, counsel to President Kennedy, New York Times, July 1, on the claim that JFK considered pre-emptive strike against Soviet missiles in Cuba.*