

Verbatim

By John T. Correll, Contributing Editor

Appeasing the Alligator

"It's kind of like feeding an alligator hoping it eats you last. And it's not a terribly proud posture, in my view."—**Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld on the theory that Spain can avoid further terror attacks by dropping out of the war on terrorism, CBS "Face the Nation," March 14.**

North Korea Says No

"Complete nuclear dismantling is a plot to overthrow the North's socialist system after stripping it of its nuclear deterrent. ... Verifiable nuclear dismantling reflects a US intention to spy on our military capabilities before starting a war. ... 'Irreversible nuclear dismantling' is nothing other than a noose to stifle us after eradicating our peaceful nuclear energy industry."—**North Korea's rejection of US demand to end nuclear programs, New York Times, March 28.**

History, Revisited

"My impression was that fighting terrorism, in general, and fighting al Qaeda, in particular, were an extraordinarily high priority in the Clinton Administration—certainly no higher priority. ... I believe the Bush Administration in the first eight months considered terrorism an important issue but not an urgent issue."—**Richard A. Clarke, former White House counterterrorism coordinator, statement to 9/11 Commission, March 24.**

Bottom Line

COMMISSION MEMBER SLADE GORTON: "Assuming that the recommendations that you made ... had all been adopted, say on January 26th, year 2001, is there the remotest chance that it would have prevented 9/11?"

RICHARD CLARKE: "No."—**9/11 Commission hearings, March 24.**

Good Enough for the Navy

"The Navy settled for the \$92 million-a-copy F/A-18 E and F to combat enemy planes and penetrate air defenses on the ground. If this Chevrolet

is good enough for the Navy, why do we need to buy almost 300 of the Air Force's F-22 Cadillacs?"—**George C. Wilson, defense correspondent, op-ed in Washington Post, April 5.**

Makes a Big Difference

"The leap from the F-15 to the F/A-22 is a much greater leap in technology and capability than it was from the F-4 to the F-15."—**Gen. T. Michael Moseley, Air Force vice chief of staff, to Congressional Air Force Caucus, March 15.**

Grandfatherly

"Besides all the flashing cameras and reporters, it was kind of like talking to your granddad."—**Midshipman Morgan Spiliotis on meeting Rumsfeld during his visit to the US Naval Academy, Baltimore Sun, April 6.**

Strike From Space

"The next generation long-range strike will probably be something that's through or from space, we're not sure yet; and there may be another generation of manned bomber that we have to go after to bridge that gap, but we're trying to get to the point that we can truly get to something that's halfway around the world in a matter of minutes to do whatever the nation needs to do."—**Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John P. Jumper, National Defense Industrial Association, April 1.**

Ralph Nader Predicts

"The Pentagon is quietly recruiting new members to fill local draft boards, as the machinery for drafting a new generation of Americans is being quietly put into place. Young Americans need to know that a train is coming, and it could run over their generation in the same way that the Vietnam War devastated the lives of those who came of age in the '60s."—**Ralph Nader, www.votenader.org, April 10.**

A Role for NATO

"We should urge NATO to create a new out-of-area operation for Iraq

under the lead of a US commander."—**Presidential candidate John F. Kerry, op-ed column, Washington Post, April 13.**

Al Qaeda's Nukes

"We sent our people to Moscow, to Tashkent, to other central Asian states, and they negotiated. And we purchased some suitcase bombs."—**Ayman al-Zawahiri, top henchman of Osama bin Laden, claiming to have bought portable nuclear weapons, New York Daily News, March 22.**

Lies, Says Carter

"There was no reason for us to become involved in Iraq recently. That was a war based on lies and misrepresentations from London and from Washington, claiming falsely that Saddam Hussein was responsible for [the] 9/11 attacks, claiming falsely that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction. And I think that President Bush and Prime Minister Blair probably knew that many of the allegations were based on uncertain intelligence. ... A decision was made to go to war [then] people said 'Let's find a reason to do so.'"—**Former US President Jimmy Carter, London's Independent, March 22.**

Kill Rumsfeld" Ad

"And then there's Rumsfeld who said of Iraq, 'We have our good days and bad days.' We should put this SOB up against a wall and say, 'this is one of our bad days,' and pull the trigger."—**Ad placed by St. Petersburg (Fla.) Democratic Club in the Gabber, a weekly newspaper in Gulfport, Fla., April 8, but later denounced by state and national Democratic Party organizations.**

Wait, Let Us Explain

"'Pull the trigger' means let Rumsfeld know where we stand, not to shoot him! We are getting raped, and they are planning to steal the election again."—**Edna McCall, vice president of the St. Petersburg Democratic Club, Drudge Report, April 13.**