

By John T. Correll, Contributing Editor

Idiots on the Home Front

"More than a third of the American public suspects that federal officials assisted in the 9/11 terrorist attacks or took no action to stop them so the United States could go to war in the Middle East."—**National poll conducted July 6-24 by the Scripps Survey Research Center at the University of Ohio, www.scrippsnews.com.**

The Duckbuilders

"Pasting feathers together, hoping for a duck."—**Unnamed colonel in end-of-tour report about efforts of the Coalition Provisional Authority under leadership of Ambassador L. Paul Bremer, presidential envoy to Iraq, 2003-04, Thomas E. Ricks, *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq*, Penguin Press, July.**

Start at the Top

"We are cutting the force from top to bottom, in fact, leading with 30 general officers. The officer field and the enlisted field are imbalanced, so it is a working process to make sure that we have force balance across the spectrum."—**Air Force Secretary Michael W. Wynne, *European Stars and Stripes*, July 20.**

Call Them Airmen

"We tell them during that coin ceremony that from this day on, we are going to call them airman. But sometimes, we get them to their first duty station and we call them kids. We call them troops. We call them the cats and dogs of the dorms. And they're not. They're airmen."—**CMSAF Rodney J. McKinley after presentation of Airman's coin to basic trainees in their final week of training, *Air Force Print News*, Aug. 8.**

Future Is on the Ground

"As in all past world wars, clashes of all arms will occur. But future combat will be tactical, isolated, precise, and most likely geographically remote, unexpected and often terribly brutal and intimate. Strategic success will come not from grand sweeping maneuvers but rather from a stacking of local successes, the sum of which will be a shift in the perceptual advantage—the tactical

schwerpunkt, the point of decision, will be very difficult to see and especially to predict. As seems to be happening in Iraq, for a time the enemy may well own the psycho-cultural high ground and hold it effectively against American technological dominance. Perceptions and trust are built among people, and people live on the ground. Thus, future wars will be decided principally by ground forces, specifically the Army, Marine Corps, Special Forces, and various reserve formations that support them."—**Retired Army Maj. Gen. Robert H. Scales, former commander of the Army War College, *Armed Forces Journal*, July 2006.**

Not Me

"I have never painted a rosy picture. I've been very measured in my words, and you'd have a dickens of a time trying to find instances where I've been excessively optimistic. I understand this is tough stuff."—**Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld, denying that he has given excessive assurances about the war in Iraq, *Senate Armed Services Committee*, Aug. 3.**

The Pendulum Swings

"South Koreans seem to have a double standard in terms of threat perceptions. Having been fed propaganda for years by military regimes that painted North Korea as an evil monster poised to devour them, they now seem to dismiss even factual claims as Cold War scare stories. Many of them see North Korea as a slightly delinquent brother who needs to be cajoled into better manners."—**Adrian Foster-Carter, *Leeds University research fellow on Korea*, *New York Times*, Aug. 11.**

About Time

"Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary R. James Nicholson Monday announced that all VA computers throughout the agency will be upgraded with enhanced data security encryption systems beginning immediately."—**VA news release, Aug. 14.**

Don't Count on Long War

"The war on terror may require a long, long time, as the Bush Administration insists, but time is not on our

side. ... If the war does last decades, our chances of losing it rise dramatically. Why? Because the illusion that we can take forever to win fosters a do-it-tomorrow mind-set in dealing with a wily, adaptive foe. It gives terrorists the time they need to acquire true weapons of mass destruction."—**John Arquilla, professor of defense analysis at the US Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, Calif., *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 16.**

Remember Reciprocity

"The United States should be an example to the world, sir. Reciprocity is something that weighs heavily in all of the discussions that we are undertaking as we develop the process and rules for the commissions, and that's the exact reason, sir. The treatment of soldiers who will be captured on future battlefields is of paramount concern."—**Maj. Gen. Scott C. Black, judge advocate general of the Army, on US plans for special courts and rules to deal with terrorists, *Senate Judiciary Committee hearing*, *Washington Post*, Aug. 3.**

Complementary Domains

"Air and space power has the ability to conduct operations and impose effects across the entire theater, wherever targets or target sets might be found, unlike surface forces that typically divide up the battlefield into individual operating areas. ... While initial [airpower] theories claimed to render surface combat obsolete, today's airmen realize that all domains of combat are complementary."—**Air Force Doctrine Document 2, *Operations and Organization*, June 27.**

Logisticians of Information

"It turns out, we are the logisticians of information. We pick it up everywhere, we send it through space, we get it up there—like a pachinko machine—through our satellite network, and back down to the ground station. [We put it] into the hands of the commander, just in time, and we figured we have to defend it."—**Secretary of the Air Force Michael W. Wynne, *Senior Leadership Orientation Course*, July 31.**