

By Robert S. Dudley

Dumping on Dempsey

“One thing General Dempsey has proven is [that], if you don’t want to intervene anywhere, in any country, you can invent reasons not to get involved. The military always errs on the side of caution, but not to the extent I see with General Dempsey’s advice.”—*Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.), commenting on Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, outgoing Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff, Wall Street Journal, May 5.*

Low, Slow, Lethal

“The combination of ‘armed,’ ‘precision,’ [and] ‘reconnaissance’ has been one of the most dramatic innovations [of the War on Terror]. It has been a critical operational instrument in the successes we have had against core Al Qaeda, in particular.”—*Undersecretary of Defense Michael G. Vickers, who retired in May, referring to emergence of USAF’s armed remotely piloted aircraft, New York Times, May 1.*

Russia the Un-Resurgent

“Russia is not resurgent. They’re running out of entrepreneurship, running out of democracy, running out of pluralism, running out of oil, running out of gas, running out of Russians—their birth rate is falling. I’m not worried about Russia in 10 to 15 years. I’m worried about Russia in zero to three years.”—*Retired USAF Gen. Michael V. Hayden, former NSA and CIA Director, interview with Newsweek, April 30.*

The Mark 10 Cortex

“Having the human brain as a sensor in combat is still immensely important, in our view. The Air Force needs a number of platforms and in [the mid-term], manned platforms will be the most beneficial.”—*Gen. Mark A. Welsh III, USAF Chief of Staff, Defense One briefing, Washington, D.C., April 22.*

But He was “On the Run”

“In the months before his death in May 2011, Osama bin Laden was discussing new gambits. ... Hunkered down in Abbottabad, bin Laden was utterly focused on striking the United States ‘in its heartland.’ He noted that the slow bleed wasn’t working: Vietnam had been far more costly to America

than Afghanistan; al Qaeda’s allies would have to kill 100 times more people to equal the Vietnam death toll. What was needed, he said a few weeks before his death, was another ‘large operation inside America [that] affects the security and nerves of 300 million Americans.’”—*Columnist David Ignatius, report based on declassified documents, Washington Post, May 5.*

Diversity, Still Elusive

“We value diversity. However, the statistics tell a different story. As a service we need to do better at achieving greater diversity of thought and experiences in leadership positions.”—*Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James, USA Today, May 3.*

Survival, Not Virgins

“Deterrence still works in Korea. ... The bit of good news on North Korea is that they are not al Qaeda, not suicidal [and] hoping for 72 virgins. The Kimster [Kim Jong Un] and friends value regime survival above all. They know that if they start any major conflict, the whole place will glow in the dark.”—*Robert A. Manning, former Korean specialist at DOD, the State Department, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, Newsweek, April 30.*

Make the Kids Pay

“America has stopped paying for its wars. In the past, wars brought dedicated tax increases and the sharing of burdens broadly among citizens—taxpayers and voters as well as the soldiers in the fight—but the Global War on Terror instead gave Americans tax cuts, deficits, and borrowing on a massive scale. ... The costs of wars are passed to future generations, those not yet with a vote. This is not a good development.”—*Harvey M. Sapolsky, former director of security studies at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Defense One, May 6.*

Breedlove’s Concern

“I would say that the security situation in Europe is less stable.... What worries me is Russia as a nation is now adopting an approach that says they can and will use military power to change international borders, or take over international

states. That’s what I truly worry about every day.”—*USAF Gen. Philip M. Breedlove, NATO Supreme Allied Commander Europe, Senate testimony, April 30.*

Get the Noose

“Within weeks of the leaks [by NSA turncoat Edward Snowden], terrorist organizations around the world were already starting to modify their actions in light of what Snowden disclosed. Communications sources dried up, tactics were changed. ISIS was one of those terrorist groups that learned from Snowden, and it is clear that his actions played a role in the rise of ISIS.”—*Michael J. Morrell, former deputy director of the CIA, excerpt from his new book The Great War of Our Time: The CIA’s Fight Against Terrorism From al Qaeda to ISIS, quoted in The Daily Beast, May 6.*

Now That’s Precision

“EXACTO has demonstrated what was once thought impossible: the continuous guidance of a small-caliber bullet to target. This live-fire demonstration from a standard rifle showed that EXACTO is able to hit moving and evading targets with extreme accuracy at sniper ranges unachievable with traditional rounds. Fitting EXACTO’s guidance capabilities into a small .50-caliber size is a major breakthrough and opens the door to what could be possible in future guided projectiles across all calibers.”—*Jerome Dunn, manager of Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency’s EXACTO program, created to develop a “self-steering” bullet, DARPA statement, April 30.*

Your Marine Corps

“When I was in Afghanistan, my tattoos never stopped me from shooting anyone, and they never made me more of a target. They never stopped me from keeping Marines safe. On patrol, nothing ever happened because of my tattoos. ... They didn’t have an issue meritoriously promoting me when I had a tattoo. I had never heard anything about my tattoos. Nothing was said until I went to the career planner.”—*USMC Sgt. Daniel Knapp, decorated infantryman denied re-enlistment because he ran afoul of the Corp’s tattoo policy, Marine Corps Times, April 20.*