

New York Times

Obama's big missile test

As President Obama will soon discover, erasing the nuclear weapons legacy of the cold war is like running the Snake River rapids in Wyoming — the first moments in the tranquil upstream waters offer little hint of the vortex ahead. Now that Mr. Obama has set a promising arms reduction agenda with President Dmitri A. Medvedev of Russia, he faces the greater challenge of getting his own government and the American nuclear weapons establishment to support his audacious plan to make deep weapons cuts and ultimately eliminate nuclear weapons.

McNamara in context

How should we remember Robert McNamara? As an engaged public servant who participated in some of the most important decisions of the 20th century? A hawk who served as the chief architect of the war in Vietnam? A technocrat who never fully understood the moral implications of his policies? A hero who steadfastly worked to prevent the escalation of conventional war into thermonuclear conflict? All of the above?

Washington Post

McNamara apologised. Will Rumsfeld?

Late in his life, Robert McNamara became a sad study in what can happen when a Pentagon leader eventually regrets taking a country into a disastrous war and attempts to atone. His belated acknowledgment of doubts and error in managing the Vietnam War came too late for many, and after his death last week he was remembered as a tragic and sorrowful figure.

Securing the internet

As recent attacks on government and private Web sites illustrate, cyber-security is a critical national issue. That's why President Obama was right when he moved to create a high-ranking "cyber-czar" to guide the development of cyber-defense. Now, months later, there is work to be done, and there is still no one in place to do it.

The Guardian

Britain must tell Obama: the alliance of denial has to end

Diplomacy, your hour has come. There is no way soldiers will find an exit from Afghanistan. They can deliver defeat or they can deliver bloody stalemate. They cannot deliver victory and

every observer knows it. This conflict will end only when the courage being daily demanded of soldiers is also shown by politicians.

We must rediscover our purpose in Afghanistan

One advantage that Afghan insurgents have over Nato forces is that they know what victory would look like. For those who despise the mere presence of foreign soldiers, the relentless killing has a simple purpose - to end the occupation.

Britain's defence policy is mired in deceit and denial

Until late in life, Robert McNamara was a familiar presence on the streets of Washington. You would see him walking along Connecticut Avenue on his way to and from his office. Most of the time he was in a light suit, a white shirt and trainers, a distinctive mix of dapper and dishevelled. But the thing you noticed most was the look in his eyes – what the New York Times obituary this week rightly called his thousand-yard stare.

The Telegraph

Afghanistan, and a lesson from history that goes unheeded

Reading Andrew Roberts's *Masters and Commanders* is a depressing experience. Not because of any flaws in this beautifully researched and wonderfully told tale of the Masters (Franklin Roosevelt and Winston Churchill) and Commanders (General George Marshall and Field Marshall Sir Alan Brooke, both chiefs of staff) who forged the strategy that won the Second World War. You leave this book unread this summer at peril to your understanding not only of the war, but of the relevance of that history to the policy decisions confronting whatever government British voters decide to trust with their fate at the next general election.

Gen Sir Richard Dannatt is a fine soldier speaking out for his men

Strenuous efforts were made by all parties in the Commons yesterday to show support for the mission to Afghanistan. While Nick Clegg has voiced misgivings, MPs were anxious that the message should go out from Parliament to the soldiers on the front line that what they are doing is both appreciated and necessary. Gordon Brown sought to answer the criticisms of the way his Government has prosecuted the war and to restate the aims and ambitions of the deployment, which is to prevent al-Qaeda using Afghanistan as a terrorist base once more.