



Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies



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CONTEMPORARY CONFLICT

[Hussein Admits Responsibility, Not Guilt](#)

The Christian Science Monitor – 2 March 2006

Former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein, after days of withering testimony about his involvement in the killings of 148 residents of a small farming town, decided he'd had enough. He'd been called a torturer and a murderer and toward the end of Wednesday's court session, he sternly sought to command the courtroom's attention. The essence of his comments: "Of course I did it." "I am Saddam Hussein, and at the time of leadership I am responsible," he said. "It is not [my] habit to rely on others." What looks like an admission of guilt for the crimes committed against the residents of Dujail after Mr. Hussein survived an assassination attempt there in 1982, may be a preview of his probable defense strategy.

[Emergency Declared in Philippines](#)

The BBC News – 24 February 2006

Philippines President Gloria Arroyo has declared a state of emergency, after the army said it had prevented a coup. She said was taking the action "because of the clear threat to the nation". A top general is being held, suspected of planning to use rallies marking 20 years since the fall of President Ferdinand Marcos to launch a coup. Thousands of protesters took to the streets of Manila on Friday in breach of the emergency order, but were beaten back by riot police using water cannon.

[The Next Iraqi War? Sectarianism and Civil Conflict](#)

International Crisis Group– 27 February 2006

The bomb attack on a sacred Shiite shrine in Samarra on 22 February 2006 and subsequent reprisals against Sunni mosques and killings of Sunni Arabs is only the latest and bloodiest indication that Iraq is teetering on the threshold of wholesale disaster. Over the past year, social and political tensions evident since the removal of the Baathist regime have turned into deep rifts. Iraq's mosaic of communities has begun to fragment along ethnic, confessional and tribal lines, bringing instability and violence to many areas, especially those with mixed populations. The most urgent of these incipient conflicts is a Sunni-Shiite schism that threatens to tear the country apart.

[It's the Regime, Stupid](#)

The Washington Post – 29 January 2006

If an air and missile strike could destroy Iran's nuclear weapons program, it might seem the best of many bad options. But the likely costs outweigh the benefits. Is

the intelligence on Iran so much better than it was on Iraq? The Clinton administration launched Operation Desert Fox against Iraq in 1998 to degrade its weapons programs, and even today we don't know what it achieved. As President Clinton later put it, "We might have gotten it all; we might have gotten half of it; we might have gotten none of it. But we didn't know." Would Desert Fox II in Iran, even on a larger scale, produce a very different result? The Pentagon can hit facilities it can see with relative confidence. But much of Iran's program is underground, and some of it we don't know about. Even if a strike set back Iran's plans, we would not know by how much. For all the price we would pay, we wouldn't even know what we'd achieved.

DEFENCE INDUSTRY

[France to Develop Advanced UAV Capability](#)

Janes Defence Weekly – 28 February 2006

The French government has awarded a contract to Sagem Défense Sécurité, part of the Safran Group, to begin development work on a "future generation UAV [unmanned aerial vehicle] for the French Army", according to Sagem's Director of Marketing and Sales, Patrick Cheniere. Cheniere, speaking at Sagem's electro-optics and UAV manufacturing facility in Montluçon, France, confirmed to Jane's that Sagem would propose the Sperwer B UAV for the French Army requirement.

[F-35 Reaches Next Stage of Development](#)

Janes Defence Weekly – 24 February 2006

The first Lockheed Martin F-35 Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) has completed assembly and was turned over to the flight line in Fort Worth, Texas, on 19 February. Ground tests will now begin in preparation for the first flight later this year. Tom Burbage, Lockheed Martin F-35 manager of programme integration, said: "Our overriding goal is to deliver an aircraft system that brings a host of fifth-generation breakthrough capabilities to the many countries that will use the F-35. That goal is now within sight." On 22 February, Lockheed highlighted several other recent developments in the JSF programme, including: the 17 February completion of the Critical Design Review for JSF conventional take-off and landing, and short take-off and vertical landing variants; the installation of the Pratt & Whitney F135 turbofan engine on 13 February; and pilot manipulation of the controls and movement of the control surfaces on 13 January.

[French Industry's 'Poison-Pill' to Stop Takeovers](#)

Janes Defence Weekly – 23 February 2006

The French government is preparing to grant domestic companies the right to use 'poison pill' strategies to protect themselves from foreign hostile takeover

bids, according to Finance Minister Thierry Breton. France's Finance Ministry said it would submit an amendment to the takeover laws currently before parliament, authorising companies to launch novel defences. It is the latest example of 'economic patriotism' by France designed to protect its industrial base. The move comes despite criticism of such measures being protectionist in nature, not least from EU competition chief Neelie Kroes, who previously warned that it could lead to a "1930s-style downward spiral" of protectionism.

[Taiwan Claims US Navy is Sabotaging SSK Plans](#)

Janes Defence Weekly – 10 February 2006

Taiwan (the Republic of China) has accused the US Navy of intentionally sabotaging the sale of eight diesel-electric submarines (SSKs) promised by the Bush administration in April 2001. A US source close to the programme has confirmed Taiwanese claims and argues that the US Navy feared the revival of a domestic SSK programme that would challenge the navy's traditional use of nuclear-powered boats.

DEFENCE TECHNOLOGY

[Military Application of OLED Micro-Displacy Technology](#)

Defence Update –Issue 03(2005)

Low-power Organic Light Emitting Diode (OLED) displays are used in a growing numbers of applications supporting dismounted soldiers and commanders in situational awareness, thermal imaging, simulation and training. Two types of OLED applications are currently under various phases of maturation – the near-eye microdisplays, developed by eMagin and Flexible OLED developed by Universal Display Corp. (UDC). OLED technology promises to revolutionize everything known about information display, from video walls, to dynamic pricing in supermarkets. For the military, Top-emitting OLED (TOLED) applications could include wrist-mounted, featherweight, rugged PDAs and wearable electronic displays such as "display sleeves" Other applications could be conformed, high-contrast automotive instrument panels, windshield displays and visor mounted displays to be used by for pilots, drivers and divers, etc. More futuristic applications could be utilized in camouflage systems, "smart" light emitting windows/shades etc

[Unattended Ground Sensors](#)

Defence Update –Issue 01(2006)

After several decades of rather obscure awareness in military operations, the use of passive sensors for remote battlefield applications is becoming more popular. Driven by modern Digital Signal Processing (DSP), sensors are become smaller, yet much more accurate and sophisticated. These technological advances have

made the development of advanced, multi-sensor Unattended Ground Sensors (UGS) possible. Existing in various sizes and forms, UGS contain several sensor technologies, deployed at the area of operation, detecting, classifying and reporting target information via wireless links to a remote control center. UGS systems use small, low cost and robust sensors expected to last in the field for weeks or even months. Other systems are providing communications, processing, as well as target verification and identification services.

[Directed Energy Weapons Face Hurdles](#)

National Defense Magazine- March 2005

The directed energy weapons used by the Stryker crews in the video are on the verge of being deployed. Some may reach Iraq and Afghanistan within this calendar year, but there are several hurdles program directors and policymakers must overcome if these new systems are to make an impact in urban battlefields. The biggest challenges will have little to do with the technology, the weapons' proponents admit. Public perception, acceptance by battlefield commanders, and treaty, legal and policy concerns will have more to do with their success than the science that has gone into them, Defense Department officials said at an Institute for Defense and Government Advancement conference.

[Light, Modular Armor Vests on Display](#)

National Defense Magazine – February 2006

Lightweight, modular body armor systems for military and security personnel—incorporating multi-hit armor technology—were unveiled by Plasan Sasa of Kibbutz Sasa, Israel, at a recent international exhibition. An advanced tactical assault vest for special forces that relies on ceramic plates was one of several models put on display by the company. It is able to provide protection against AK-47 assault rifles and NATO ball weapons. Also featured was a hinged, one-square-meter shield that the company says protects against 7.62mm ammunition and improvised explosive devices. The shield is carried in a backpack.

[Stealth Sharks to Patrol the High Seas](#)

The New Scientist – 1 March 2006

IMAGINE getting inside the mind of a shark: swimming silently through the ocean, sensing faint electrical fields, homing in on the trace of a scent, and navigating through the featureless depths for hour after hour. We may soon be able to do just that via electrical probes in the shark's brain. Engineers funded by the US military have created a neural implant designed to enable a shark's brain signals to be manipulated remotely, controlling the animal's movements, and perhaps even decoding what it is feeling. That team is among a number of groups around the world that have gained ethical approval to develop implants that can monitor and influence the behaviour of animals, from sharks and tuna to rats and monkeys. These researchers hope such implants will improve our understanding

of how the animals interact with their environment, as well as boosting research into tackling human paralysis.

[Slippery Ships Float on Thin Air](#)

The New Scientist – 18 February 2006

YOSHIAKI KODAMA is weaving a magic carpet large enough to carry a ship. Conjured up from thin air at the flick of a switch, this slippery blanket will help transport a fully laden tanker or container ship across the ocean at higher speed, and using far less fuel, than ever before. Kodama is director of the Advanced Maritime Transport Technology Department at Japan's National Maritime Research Institute (NMRI) in Tokyo. His work is just one of several major programmes under way in the US, Russia, Japan and Europe that focus on how to make ships more slippery.

ENERGY SECURITY

[China, India and the oil market](#)

The Economist - 19 January 2006

THE global scramble by China and India for oil assets abroad started to worry western oil majors last year. Egged on by governments concerned about energy security, once-irrelevant Asian energy firms gobbled up oil and gas everywhere from Ecuador to Canada to Kazakhstan. China's CNOOC even made an audacious (although ultimately unsuccessful) \$18.5 billion bid for America's Unocal. But the setback has not dented CNOOC's ambitions. The company has just announced a successful \$2.25 billion deal for oil and gas assets in Nigeria. There are market rumours that the same Chinese firm is now looking to snap up Nations Energy, a Canadian firm with assets in Central Asia, for a further \$2 billion. The new king of Saudi Arabia has just announced that his first trip abroad will be to China and India.

[The Politics of Power](#)

The Economist - 9 February 2006

WHEN Russia cut off gas supplies through Ukraine at the start of this year all of Europe took fright. The European Union's long-term energy supply plans, which depended in good part on Russian gas, suddenly seemed naive. Although the gas was quickly turned back on, prices have been rising sharply during what has been a cold winter in many parts of Europe. From Italy to Britain, fears about global warming have put energy policy, including the possible reintroduction of nuclear power, on the agenda. Meanwhile, European energy companies have continued to consolidate, but, controversially, mostly within countries rather than across borders. In the latest such deal, Gas Natural and Endesa won approval

for a €22 billion merger that would combine Spain's biggest gas and electricity companies to create a new national champion.

MILITARY OPERATIONS

[The Urban Electromagnetic Environment](#)

Defence Update – Issue 01(2006)

The urban environment creates many unique difficulties for modern military operations. Communications become limited and unreliable due to multi-path reflections from walls, and electromagnetic masking by thick concrete and steel structures. These effects cause degradation in the Quality Of Service (QOS) for both voice and data networks, even at very short ranges. In addition to multi-path effects, multiple networks and large numbers of wireless devices operating over a wide frequency spectrum and in a confined area, cause severe interference. GPS coverage is often limited to open areas, resulting in lack of coordination between forces and insufficient situational awareness, especially for operations in densely populated areas.

[Relief Mission Tests Hickam's New Capability](#)

Air Force Print News – 24 February 2006

Flying a “loaner” C-17 Globemaster III aircraft, a mixed active-duty and Guard aircrew flew the 15th Airlift Wing’s first contingency response mission. The aircraft, from Charleston Air Force Base, S.C., flew relief supplies to Clark Air Base, Philippines, Feb. 22. It was the first time a mixed crew had flown such a mission. Members of the Hawaii Air National Guard’s 204th Airlift Squadron were also part of the crew. The C-17 carried military rations, water, cots, tents, heavy equipment and wing Airmen to Clark, a former U.S. Air Force base. The mission was part of U.S. Pacific Command’s response to the Filipino government’s request for help after a devastating mudslide covered the village of Guinsaigon on Leyte Island.

NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION

[Iran: Is There a Way Out of the Nuclear Impasse?](#)

International Crisis Group – 23 February 2006

There is no easy way out of the Iranian nuclear dilemma. Iran, emboldened by the situation in Iraq and soaring oil prices, and animated by a combination of insecurity and assertive nationalism, insists on its right to develop full nuclear fuel cycle capability, including the ability to enrich uranium. Most other countries, while acknowledging to varying extents Iran’s right under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) to acquire that capability for peaceful energy purposes,

have a concern – reinforced by Iran's lack of transparency in the past, continuing support for militant Middle East groups and incendiary presidential rhetoric – that once able to highly enrich uranium, it will be both able and tempted to build nuclear weapons. But EU-led diplomacy so far has failed to persuade Iran to forego its fuel cycle ambitions; the UN Security Council seems unlikely to agree on sanctions strong enough to force it to do so; and preventive military force is both a dangerous and unproductive option.

Tomorrow's WMD – Neutralising Intent

Jane's Defence Weekly – 8 February 2006

Biogenetically engineered super viruses, deadly chemical agents specially designed to hang in the air for hours and armies of autonomously operated malicious software programmes called 'Cyber Bots', represent only a handful of potential threats that will be technologically possible within a decade, say US intelligence and defence officials. Commercial endeavours are increasingly likely to be the principal source of such technology. "I am worried that we will have to go against a broader scope of technology than we ever have had to in the past. We are going to have to go after things that are potentially coming out of biology laboratories such as [bugs] genetically engineered for the advance disruption or incapacitation of humans. Very high-end stuff," said one US defence official with technical expertise on the subject.