

Et cetera; Smart insights on the news of the day

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Body

Jeffrey Goldberg and Marc Ambinder, The Atlantic: "The United States must, for its own security, keep watch over Pakistan's nuclear program -- and that's more easily done if we remain engaged with the Pakistani government. Pakistan, for its part, can afford to lose neither America's direct financial support, nor the help America provides with international lending agencies. Nor can Pakistan's military afford to lose its access to American weapons systems, and to the trainers attached to them. For all these reasons, Pakistan and America remain locked in a hostile embrace."

Bill Reiter, Fox Sports: "At the root of the myriad pieces of good news stemming from NBA owners and players reaching tentative agreement to start the season on Christmas Day is this simple fact: Those entangled in the long lockout realized the NBA is not, in fact, the NFL. Thus, instead of the universal 'Hallelujah!' that greeted football's return after its own lockout this summer was Saturday's mixture of relief, and the sense it's about darn time. The NBA, a league bursting with possibility, figured out it's not the NFL -- that is has no universal hold on the sports scene; that it's not the big dog; that, like any up-and-coming talent, being smart about the future is as important as having one."

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