



### **War is still war**

President Obama's kinder terminology won't make war any safer. In fact it makes it more dangerous, writes Victor Davis Hanson. **C5**

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## Deputy public defender earns honors

BY RICHARD K. De ATLEY  
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A Riverside County deputy public defender who has won several cases by putting on an aggressive defense that often includes putting the accused on the witness stand will receive a state organization's top honor today.

R. Addison Steele II was named the Defender of the Year for 2009 by the California Public Defenders Association.

He was scheduled to receive the honor at the organization's state convention in Lake Tahoe.

He earned it for "solid legal work and an uncompromising concern for cli-

ents," the organization said. Steele, a vocal critic who says the Riverside County District Attorney's office overfiles criminal charges, said the award honors the entire defender's office.

"The statewide organization recognizes what a difficult defense environment it is in Riverside County, where felony convictions of all charges in a case only happens 40 percent of the time," he said by telephone.

Steele has won acquittals with a courtroom style that can include calling his client as a witness, a tactic almost always shunned by defense attorneys.

"The way I look at the case is, I only keep my client off

the stand if I have to. That is very different," he said in a telephone interview. He teaches other attorneys his methods.

While the burden for proving a defendant's guilt is on the prosecution, "I think the jury, for the most part, expects me to prove the client's innocence," Steele said.

Steele's "ability to enable the community — the jury — to see the client as a human being, to see the client through his eyes, is amazing," said Assistant Public Defender Robert Willey.



R. Addison Steele II

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