

APSNet Semi-Weekly Bulletin, December 15, 2010

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After six years of publication, I have to tell you that this week we will be publishing the final APSNet bulletin and the final APSNet Policy Forum essays and APSNet Special reports.

1. [Warlord ally 'plotting with Taliban'](#), Tom Hyland, Age, 2010-12-12

A warlord and key Australian ally in Afghanistan has been accused of conspiring with the Taliban to kill a tribal rival. The allegation, if true, exposes the risk in the army's alliance with warlord Matiullah Khan, whose militiamen have been trained in Australia and serve alongside Australian troops in Oruzgan province.

- [General defends Afghan warlord ties](#), Dan Oakes, Age, 2010-12-07
- [The Dutch engagement in Uruzgan - TLO Report 2010](#), The Liaison Office, 2010-10-05
- [The battle for Afghanistan: Militancy and Conflict in Zabul and Uruzgan](#), Martine van Bijlert, New America Foundation, September 2010 [PDF, 1.4MB]
- [The warlord of the highway - Matiullah Khan is the most feared crossing guard in Afghanistan](#), Christoph Reuter, Vice

2. [Defence costings dodgy: US](#), Philip Dorling and Richard Baker, Age, 2010-12-14

America has expressed doubts about Australia's ability to pay for its biggest military build-up since World War II, after one of Canberra's most senior defence officials was unable to explain how costings in the defence white paper were made. A confidential cable from the United States embassy in Canberra suggests Australia may have to sell Defence real estate and delay purchasing new military equipment to meet the budgetary requirements of the May 2009 white paper.

- [Mustering money to toughen up military proving a hard battle](#), minister admits, Mark Davis, SMH, 2010-12-15

3. [Rudd calls for inspections of Israel's nuclear facility](#), John Lyons, Australian, 2010-12-14

Foreign Minister Kevin Rudd has arrived in Israel with a blunt message: allow international inspectors into your nuclear facility. He has also called on Israel to stop building in Jewish settlements in both the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

- [Lieberman rejects Rudd's calls for Israel to sign NPT](#), Jerusalem Post, 2010-12-14

4. [Chinese furious at military build-up](#), Philip Dorling and Richard Baker, SMH, 2010-12-10

The Rudd government publicly played down reports of a hostile Chinese reaction to the defence white paper released last year, while secretly briefing the US that Beijing had threatened Australia would "suffer the consequences" if references to China were not watered down.

- [Philippines a 'basket case' and Timor a 'burden'](#), Philip Dorling, Age, 2010-12-15

5. [Afghanistan: our secret fears](#), Philip Dorling and Nick McKenzie, Age, 2010-12-10

Australia is deeply pessimistic about its engagement in Afghanistan, and senior officials have described as hopeless the key task of training the Afghan national police.

- [Intelligence reports offer dim views of Afghan war](#), Elisabeth Bumiller, NYT, 2010-10-14
- [Terror groups 'broken'](#), Philip Dorling, Age 2010-12-15

6. [A commentary by Thomas Darnstädt](#), Spiegel International Online, 2010-

12-13

According to the German Constitutional Court, it is only the full-fledged ability of all citizens to have access to all information, at least in principle, which makes the formation of public opinion possible. And it is the unobstructed formation of public opinion that makes it possible to view the outcome of elections as being representative of the will of the people. If the state derives its democratic authority from citizens having comprehensive information, then providing information becomes a civic duty. And breach of secrecy becomes a mark of the quality of a democracy.

7. [Indoleaks touts revealing WikiLeaks documents](#), but technical problems persist, Armando Siahaan, Jakarta Globe, December 12, 2010

Indoleaks.org went online on Friday. The documents it first published contained information about the Lapindo mud volcano disaster in 2006 and the alleged coup attempt by the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) in 1960 [sic]. Others were reports on the investigation of the 2004 murder of human rights activist Munir Said Thalib and the transcript of a conversation between former President Suharto and his US contemporary, Richard Nixon, in 1975.

- [Indoleaks.org](#)
- [Preliminary report on the factors and causes in the loss of well banjar panji-1](#), Simon Wilson, Indoleaks, 2010-12-03

8. [Dozens feared dead in Christmas Island asylum-seeker boat crash](#), Australian, 2010-12-15

The death toll from the asylum-seeker boat crash at Christmas Island is believed to be 50, with about 36 others injured, the Royal Flying Doctor Service said. Witnesses on Christmas Island told of a "major tragedy" after the asylum-seeker boat crashed into cliffs this morning. Estimates of numbers aboard the boat ranged from 70 to 100, with most of them Iranians or Iraqis.

- [Refugee advocate asks why asylum boat was alone on Christmas Island arrival](#), Joe Kelly and James Massola, Australian, 2010-12-15
<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/refugee-advocate-asks-why-asylum-boat-was-alone-on-christmas-island-arrival/story-fn59niix-1225971585017>

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