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# APSNet Semi-Weekly Bulletin, October 6, 2010

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### 1. [Cost of war may lead to budget gap](#), Tim Colebatch, Age, 2010-10-04

The federal budget is facing a funding gap of up to \$10 billion over the next five years, with the Finance Department revealing that no money has been set aside for overseas troop commitments after this year. On reasonable assumptions, continuation of Australia's commitment to Afghanistan, Iraq, East Timor and the Solomon Islands at current levels would cost \$2 billion a year by 2012-13. In theory, that would wipe out half of the \$3.8 billion surplus forecast for that year.

- [ADF budget - Afghanistan](#), Australia in Afghanistan, Nautilus Institute
- [Academics say two wars bust even their own budget predictions, place cost at \\$900 billion](#), Giulia Lasagni, Medill News Service, UPI, 2010-09-03
- [The True Cost of the War - Witness testimonies](#): Joint Statement by Linda Bilmes and Joseph Stiglitz, United States Congress, House of Representatives, Veterans Affairs Committee, 2010-0-30

## **2. [Facing battle fatigue](#), Michelle Grattan, Age, 2010-10-02**

The political leaders have ignored the unpopularity of the commitment by drawing around them the cloak of bipartisanship. But now that Afghanistan is suddenly on the agenda, it is awkward for the Prime Minister and the Opposition Leader.

## **3. [Australia could charge WikiLeaks over US document release](#), Dylan Welch, Age, 2010-10-01**

Australia's Attorney-General has flagged charging WikiLeaks members for their involvement in releasing confidential US military documents. But he would not comment on allegations by a WikiLeaks insider that Australian intelligence agencies had been monitoring WikiLeaks's founder Julian Assange while he was in Australia, or whether they shared intelligence about him with agencies from the US, Britain and Sweden.

- [Afghan War Diary](#), Wikileaks

## **4. [Soldiers charged over deadly Afghan raid](#), ABC, APP, 2010-09-27**

The Director of Military Prosecutions says a former member of Australia's Special Operations Task Group will be charged with manslaughter following an incident in which four children died last year in Afghanistan. The charges relate to an incident on February 12, 2009, when six Afghans were killed during an Australian Special Operations Task Group raid targeting an insurgent leader in Uruzgan province.

- [Charges headed off war crimes trial](#), Dan Oakes, Age, 2010-09-30
- [Army quizzed on legal aid for accused soldiers](#), Dylan Welch, Age, 2010-10-01
- [Government Inquiries - Afghanistan](#), Australia in Afghanistan, Nautilus Institute

## **5. [US agrees to defence treaty](#), SMH, 2010-10-03**

Australia will find it easier to access sensitive US defence technology after the US Senate agreed to ratify the Australia-US Defence Trade Co-operation Treaty. Defence Minister Stephen Smith said the treaty created a framework for trade between Australia and the US in classified and unclassified but controlled defence articles without the need for export licenses.

- [Treaty between the Government of Australia and the Government of the United States of America Concerning Defense Trade Cooperation](#), Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2007-09-05 [PDF, 140KB]

## **6. [Defence contract row widens](#), Richard Baker, Age, 2010-09-30**

A multimillion-dollar Commonwealth aviation contracting scandal has widened, with a flight broker involved in an Australian Defence Force tender controversy enjoying a near monopoly on asylum-seeker transport contracts, prompting complaints from rival firms. Brisbane's Adagold Aviation has won 52 of 56 Department of Immigration and Citizenship asylum-seeker flight contracts awarded between June last year and March 31.

## **7. [Indonesian ambassador's comments cause Dutch row](#), Radio Netherlands Worldwide, 2010-09-23**

Ambassador Yunus Effendi Habibie said it was extremely doubtful that the planned state visit of Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono to the Netherlands would go ahead were the PVV to join the new Dutch government. He went on to say that members of the Dutch electorate who voted for the PVV, which is led by populist politician Geert Wilders, may be suffering from anxiety psychoses.

- [Disappointment over cancellation of Indonesian president's visit](#), Radio Netherlands Worldwide, 2010-10-05
- [Malukan bid to have president arrested](#), Tom Allard, SMH, 2010-10-06

## **8. [The getting of wisdom](#), Daniel Flitton, SMH, 2010-10-02**

The limits of Australia's influence in the Solomons remain clear, despite it sponsoring the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands and estimated spending of more than \$1 billion in the past seven years. While RAMSI works in the community, its partners in the government are weak. And as long as the political system remains so feeble, there is a risk the Solomons will slip back into chaos.

- [Solomons ready to forgive and forget](#), Daniel Flitton, Age, 2010-10-02
- [Australia in Solomon Islands](#), Australian Forces Abroad, Nautilus Institute

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Nautilus Institute  
608 San Miguel Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707-1535 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email:  
[nautilus@nautilus.org](mailto:nautilus@nautilus.org)