APSNet Semi-Weekly Bulletin, April 19, 2010

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1. We've got your back in Afghan province, Peter Hartcher, SMH, 2010-04-16

The US is planning to send extra forces to provide security for Australian troops in Afghanistan after the Rudd government declined to send any more. This will solve the immediate problem looming for the 1550 Australian soldiers when the Dutch forces providing security withdraw midyear.

- Barack Obama praises Australia's Afghanistan role, ABC Radio Australia News, 2010-04-16
- Coalition forces – Netherlands, Australia in Afghanistan, Nautilus Institute

2. Submarine builder to cut jobs, John Kerin, AFR*, 2010-04-17

The shipbuilding and submarine arms of Adelaide-based ASC will be merged under a restructuring. Steve Ludlam, managing director, said a number of staff would be affected where overlap existed between the submarine and shipbuilding divisions, although the number of jobs to go was still to be determined.
*[Subscription required]

- Submarine chief scopes the future, John Kerin, AFR*, 2010-04-17
  *[Subscription required]
- Work on destroyer begins, John Kerin, AFR*, 2010-04-16
  *[Subscription required]

3. Africa finally part of the big picture, Tony Walker, AFR*, 2010-04-19

Australia is finally beginning to turn its attention to the resource-rich continent, and the change is being led by business.
*[Subscription required]

- Into Africa: how the resource boom is making sub-Saharan Africa more important to Australia, Roger Donnelly and Benjamin Ford, Lowy Institute Paper 24, Lowy Institute, 2008

4. PM reopens Howard's toughest compound, Paul Maley and Paige Taylor, Australian, 2010-04-19

Kevin Rudd has reopened one of the most controversial Howard-era detention centres, the Curtin facility in Western Australia, in an attempt to send a clear signal to prospective asylum-seekers that Australia is toughening up its refugee policies.

- UN concerned about Australia's asylum freeze, AFP, 2010-04-17

5. Human rights act canned as election looms, Joel Gibson, SMH, 2010-04-19

The federal government is preparing to announce that it will not create a human rights act for Australia despite the recommendations of a report it commissioned last year.

6. Fiji open to possible Thaksin residency bid, RNZI, 2010-04-19

The interim government in Fiji says it would treat the former Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra like any other applicant if he sought to settle in Fiji.

- Thaksin believed to be in South Pacific, Nation, 2010-04-16

7. Malaysia and the Bomb, Joshua Pollack, Arms Control Wonk.com, 2010-0--12

When nuke wonks think of Malaysia they tend to think, “Hey, isn’t that where the A.Q. Khan network produced centrifuge components for Libya? And isn’t that the last of the industrializing countries without nuclear export controls?”

8. Population debate misses the facts, Clive Hamilton, SMH, 2010-04-19

Over the next decades hundreds of thousands of Australians will try to escape those parts of the continent that have become too unpleasant or dangerous to live in and migrate to those that have better water supplies, fewer days of extreme heat and adequate protection from floods, fires and rising seas.

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