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1. [Report blasts hole in government's plan to acquire new subs](#), Dan Oakes, SMH, 2010-03-19

Australia pays vastly more than other countries for defence equipment, a study has found. The study conducted in the US by McKinsey consultants, raise further concerns about how the federal government intends to acquire a fleet of 12 submarines to replace the trouble-prone Collins-class submarines.

- [Need to dive deeper](#), Brian Toohey, AFR*, 2010-03-20

2. [All-clear for nukes deal with Russia](#), Daniel Flitton, Age, 2010-03-19

The federal government has cleared the way to sell Australian uranium to Russia - rejecting fears that the nuclear material could find its way into atomic weapons. In a long-awaited response to a report calling for Australia to delay ratifying a Howard-era treaty with Russia, the government said that there was only a remote chance Australian uranium would be diverted to weapons programs.

- [Value-subtracting: Form vs. substance in Australian uranium safeguard policy](#), Richard Leaver, Austral Special Report 09-08S, 2009-12-11, Austral Peace and Security Network, Nautilus Institute [PDF, 360 Kb]

[3. Economic and defense ties on China-RI agenda](#), Lilian Budianto, Jakarta Post, 2010-03-20

Indonesia will seek to enhance economic and defense ties with China when the heads of the two leading economies in the world meet in Jakarta. The strategic partnership has translated into a number of cooperation deals, including the joint military production begun in 2008 and extradition agreement signed in 2009. Indonesia has also conducted joint military training with China, whose military budget is the world's second largest after that of the United States.

[4. As Taliban makes comeback in Kunduz province, war spreads to northern Afghanistan](#), Keith B. Richburg, Washington Post, 2010-03-19

For most of the past eight years, this northern province has been relatively peaceful. But the past year has brought such a dramatic Taliban comeback in Kunduz that Gen. Stanley A. McChrystal is planning to shift some of the ongoing troop reinforcements to the north of the country, the first significant American deployment to the region since the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001.

- [Ministerial statement on Afghanistan](#), Transcript, Department of Defence, 2010-03-18
- [Major Afghan offensive 'under way'](#), Aljazeera, 2010-03-18

[5. Policing Afghanistan: how afghan police training became a train wreck](#), Pratap Chatterjee, TomDisatch.com, 2010-03-21

The billion-dollar contract will be the linchpin of a training program for the Afghan National Police, who are theoretically to be drilled in counterinsurgency tactics that will help defeat the Taliban and bring security to impoverished, war-torn Afghanistan. The Pentagon faces a tough choice: Should it award a new contract to Xe (formerly Blackwater), or to DynCorp?

[6. The new rules of war](#), John Arquilla, Foreign Policy, 2010-03/04

The evidence of the last 10 years shows clearly that massive applications of force have done little more than kill the innocent and enrage their survivors. To focus the redesign effort, a moratorium would be declared on all legacy-like systems (think aircraft carriers, other big ships, advanced fighters, tanks, etc.). It should not be assumed that the huge sums invested in national defense have been wisely spent.

[7. Australia has failed Hu in bid for open trial: expert](#), John Garnaut, Age, 2010-03-22

An expert on Chinese law has queried why the Australian government is "giving up so quickly" on transparency questions surrounding the trial of Rio Tinto's chief iron-ore salesman in China, Stern Hu.

Nautilus Institute

2342 Shattuck Ave. #300, Berkeley, CA 94704 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email:

nautilus@nautilus.org