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1. Experts shoot holes in Kevin Rudd's defence white paper, Patrick Walters, Australian, 2009-06-25

The Rudd government's new defence white paper has been propped up by "unprecedented media spin" and contains an utter lack of transparency on how it will be funded, according to one of Australia's most respected defence analysts. Paul Dibb strongly criticised key elements of the white paper, released last month, saying it had failed to deliver real transparency when it came to either spending or defence industry plans.

- Defence White Paper - The experts' view, Hugh White and Prof Paul Dibb, National Press Club of Australian, 2009-06-24

2. Palestinian Authority wants Diggers in Gaza, Greg Sheridan, Australian, 2009-06-25

Riad Malki said the Palestinian Authority was willing to "go the extra mile" in assuring Israel that its security needs would be met, in the event of a peace agreement, or even substantial peace negotiations. The Palestinians' first preference is for Arab troops, but they would be happy to accept Western, specifically Australian, troops as peacekeepers and peace monitors.

- Israel to Gillard: thanks for standing by us, Jason Koutsoukis, Age, 2009-06-24

3. Legal battle to halt polluting power plants, Miki Perkins, Age, 2009-06-23

East Timorese environmental groups and the Fretilin opposition will launch a legal challenge to stop the construction of three heavily polluting power plants in the country. They have criticised the purchase of the heavy-oil plants amid rumours about irregularities in contracts with the Beijing-owned Chinese Nuclear Industry 22nd Construction Company.

4. DMO defends secrecy on industry aid, John Kerin and Peter Robers, AFR*, 2009-06-25

The government's weapons purchaser, the Defence Materiel Organisation, has defended keeping secret the identities of companies singled out for special assistance under a new industry scheme, so as not to alert other countries to Australia's military vulnerabilities. The priority industry capability (PIC) scheme is one of a number of areas where defence analysts and industry leaders have decried a lack of transparency in the defence budget and white paper.
*Subscription required

- Defence dismisses SME's help calls, Peter Roberts, AFR*, 2009-06-25
  - Subscription required
- German bidder holds fire on guns, Patrick Walters, Australian, 2009-06-24

5. Unfinished business: Police accountability in Indonesia, Amnesty International, 2009-06-24

Impunity is deeply engrained throughout Indonesia's criminal justice system, whereby perpetrators of human rights violations are rarely brought to justice for their crimes. Strong mechanisms would help to prevent human rights violations by punishing perpetrators and providing reparations and assistance to victims through a free, fair and transparent process.

- Indonesian officer shot dead in Papua, ABC, 2009-06--025
- TNI soldier shoots student in Papua, Jakarta Post, 2009-06-24

6. Military moves high-tech tools to Afghanistan, Walter

Pincus, Washington Post, 2009-06-29

Saturday's episode illustrates one result from what is becoming a major transfer from Iraq to Afghanistan of people, equipment and techniques of the Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Organization (JIEDDO). The makeshift bombs caused about 70 percent of the deaths and casualties among U.S. and coalition troops in Iraq, so the administration is putting additional assets to work to reduce that threat in Afghanistan.

- Afghan bomb strikes to escalate this year – expert, Reuters, 2009-06-23

7. In reversal, Kyrgyzstan won't close a U.S. base, Michael Schwirtz and Clifford J. Levy, NYT, 2009-06-23

Kyrgyzstan has essentially reversed a decision to close an American air base that is central to the NATO mission in nearby Afghanistan, after the United States acceded to sharply higher rent and to minor restrictions on the site.

- Manas Air Base, Australian Bases Abroad, Nautilus Institute

8. Don't let torturers off the hook: UN, Cynthia Banham, Age, 2009-06-25

Matilda Bogner, the regional representative for the Pacific office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, said Australia could "do more in the Pacific region to promote human rights", including to stress the importance of countries signing up to the convention. She said Australia, as a huge aid donor in the region, had a large program on policing and the training of police, and it could strengthen its program to incorporate human rights and issues about torture.

9. Australia urged to listen to poorer nations, Daniel Flitton, Age, 2009-06-24

A senior United Nations official has warned that Australia must take seriously the plight of poorer countries during the global economic downturn or risk derailing its Security Council campaign. Byron Blake, special UN adviser, said small Pacific island nations in particular looked to Australia to help carry their case. He said the economic crisis, coupled with the problems linked to climate change, posed a "life or death" threat to poorer nations.

- Mass poverty in Asia and the GFC, Dr Peter McCawley, Lowy Institute, June 2009

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Richard Tanter,
Project Co-ordinator

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