

# APSNet Semi-Weekly Bulletin, February 26, 2009

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## Recommended Citation

"APSNet Semi-Weekly Bulletin, February 26, 2009", APSNet Semi-Weekly Bulletin, February 26, 2009, <https://nautilus.org/apsnet/apsnet-26-february-2009/>

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### **[1. No Western-Style Democracy in Afghanistan: Angus Houston, Patrick Walters, Australian, 2009-02-26](#)**

The US and its allies have scaled back their strategic objectives in Afghanistan, retreating from the political vision of a Western-style democratic state, according to Australian defence chief Angus Houston.

- [Afghan Violence Will Worsen: Defence Chief](#), Brendan Nicholson, Age, 2009-02-26
- [Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Estimates](#), Proof Committee Hansard, 2009-02-25 [PDF, 188 KB]

### **[2. China Breaks Its Silence On Afghanistan, M. K. Bhadrakumar, Asia Times, 2009-02-24](#)**

Beijing has spoken out about the Afghanistan "problem". Apparently, the Middle Kingdom has no problem with the United States reinforcing its presence in what it called the "tomb of empires". Instead, China will focus on securing its own position and biding its time,

- [Will Adjustments in U.S. Anti-Terror Strategy Successful?](#) People's Daily Online, 2009-02-23

### **3. Global Crunch Could Scuttle Sale of Submarine Builder ASC, Patrick Walters, Australian, 2009-02-25**

The global financial crisis could force the Rudd Government to jettison long-held plans to sell the commonwealth-owned submarine builder ASC. Cabinet's national security committee is due to finally consider the ASC sale issue next week, with Finance Minister Lindsay Tanner keen to offload the wholly government-owned company that built the Collins-class submarines.

### **4. David Irvine Appointed Head of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO), Mark Dodd, Australian, 2009-02-25**

Career spy David Irvine has been appointed head of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO), the federal Government has announced. The move marks a major leadership shake-up of Australia's two main spy agencies.

- [New Director-General Of Security](#), Robert McClelland, Attorney General for Australian, 2009-02-25
- [Directors-General of Security](#), ASIO
- [Australian intelligence organisations](#), Australian Forces Abroad, Nautilus Institute

### **5. Worst Drought in Half-Century Shrivels the Wheat Belt of China, Michael Wines, NYT, 2009-02-24**

A long rainless stretch has underscored the urgency of water problems in a region that grows three-fifths of China's crops and houses more than two-fifths of its people — but gets only one-fifth as much rain as the rest of the country. The current drought, considered the worst in Northern China in at least half a century, is crippling not only the country's best wheat farmland, but also the wells that provide clean water to industry and to millions of people.

- [The Geopolitics of Food Scarcity](#), Lester Brown, Die Spiegel, 2009-02-11

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