

APSNet Semi-Weekly Bulletin, July 7, 2008

Recommended Citation

"APSNet Semi-Weekly Bulletin, July 7, 2008", APSNet Semi-Weekly Bulletin, July 07, 2008,
<https://nautilus.org/apsnet/apsnet-7-july-2008/>

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1. [US 'Planned to Test Nerve Gas on Diggers'](#), Ross Coulthart, Sunday, Nine Network News, 2008-07-06

Newly declassified Australian Defence Department and Prime Minister's office files show that the US was strongly pushing for tests on Australian soil of two of the most deadly chemical weapons ever developed, VX and GB nerve gas. The plan called for 200 mainly Australian combat troops to be aerially bombed and sprayed with the chemical weapons — with all but a handful of the soldiers to be kept in the dark about the "full details" of the tests.

- [Fitzgibbon Wants Brief on Nerve Gas Plan](#), Nine Network News, 2008-07-07
- [The Secret Test](#), Sunday, Nine MSN [video]

2. [How to Sound Convincing When No-one Will Listen](#), Laura Tingle, AFR*, 2008-07-05

[The mining boom], right now, is a major headache for the government in terms of the relationship with China. "Like China, and like many other nations, we apply a national interest test to foreign

investment in our country ", [Treasurer Wayne Swan] said pointedly. (This article includes a table of foreign investors in Australian mining companies).

* Subscription required.

[3. When Australia Had a Bombshell for US](#), Tom Hyland, Age, 2008-07-06

Newly released secret documents shed fresh light on Australia's push for its own nuclear arsenal and the friction this caused with Washington, at a time when the US was trying to win support for the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, signed 40 years ago this month with the aim of halting the spread of nuclear weapons.

- ["The Impulse Towards a Safer World"](#) 40th Anniversary of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty, Australia's Prime Minister Wanted "Nuclear Option", National Security Archive, George Washington University [see documents 16a, 16b, 16c & 16d]

[4. Treasury Warns on Military Spending](#), Jessica Irvine, SMH, 2008-07-07

The pace of spending on the military cannot be sustained without inflaming the already acute pressures on the budget caused by the ageing of the population, Treasury analysis to be published today shows.

- [Departing Chief Flags Bigger Army](#), Patrick Walters, Australian, 2008-07-05
- [Briefing Note: Defence and Security Aspects of the Federal Budget](#), 2008-09, Nautilus Institute

[5. Call to Submerge Our Naval Force](#), Patrick Walters, Australian, 2008-07-04

Australia needs a larger and more potent submarine fleet armed with land-strike missiles and should consider a historic shift away from big surface warships. A new study argues that the emerging build-up of navies throughout the region, which includes growing numbers of submarines and the deployment of supersonic sea-skimming missiles by Russia, China and India, is making surface ships more vulnerable.

- [Asian military trends and their implications for Australia](#), Strategic Insight 42, Andrew Davies, ASPI, 2008-07-03

[6. Indonesia Seeks to Shut Navy Lab Researching Avian Flu](#), Paul Watson, Los Angeles Times, 2008-07-05

Threats to shut down a U.S. Navy medical research lab in Indonesia may undermine the hunt for mutating viruses that could set off the next flu pandemic, Western scientists warn.

- [U. S. Naval Medical Research Unit No.2](#), Global Emerging Infections System, Department of Defense

[7. Garnaut Calls for Urgent Climate Action](#), Age, 2008-07-04

Climate change is real and urgent, and Australia must have emissions trading in place in 2010 or face a catastrophe. That's the message from the nation's top climate change adviser Ross Garnaut, who is sticking to his guns on the need for drastic action to counter global warming.

- [Draft Report, Garnaut Climate Change Review](#), July 2008
- [Climate Change Fuelling Drought - CSIRO](#), News.com.au, 2008-07-06
- [An Assessment of the Impact of Climate Change, on the Nature and Frequency of Exceptional Climatic Events](#), CSIRO and Bureau of Meteorology, July 2008 [1.74 Mb, PDF]

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