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Austral Peace and Security Network (APSNet)

Thursday 15 December 2005

Bi-weekly report from the Nautilus Institute at RMIT, Australia.

1. White Australia Rules
2. Malaysia Delivers Blow To Australia
3. Indonesia Guarded On Straits Patrol
4. RAAF Orion To Visit Philippines
5. Special Report: Australian National Security: Defence Update 2005

1. White Australia Rules,
   Marilyn Lake, Age, 2005-12-15The racial violence in Sydney should surprise no one. Xenophobia is older than the Federation. In the masculine melee last Sunday, mateship provided vital reinforcement of white solidarity. Now the battleground is the surf beach. Placed in a nationalist frame, the politics of race became the politics of possession: proprietorial "Aussies" determined to reclaim their territory and "protect their women".
2. Malaysia Delivers Blow To Australia,
   Connie Levett, SMH, 2005-12-15The chairman of the East Asia summit, Malaysian leader Abdullah Badawi, said Australia was not geographically part of East Asia and he did not see how it could regard itself as such. Mr Badawi also named India and New Zealand as outsiders to East Asia but made special reference to Australia.
3. Indonesia Guarded On Straits Patrol,
   AFR*, 2005-12-12Indonesia has given qualified support to a plan for Australian navy patrol

aircraft to help guard the strategic Malacca Straits against terrorist attacks and piracy. *subscription required

4. RAAF Orion To Visit Philippines, Media Release 2005-12-06, Senator Robert Hill, Minister for DefenceAustralian Defence Force Orion aircraft will visit the Philippines this week to highlight the value of having an air-based maritime surveillance capability to prevent the movement of terrorists and criminal groups in the region. Senator Hill said the Philippines Government is currently examining options to enhance its maritime security, especially in the southern Philippines where there are growing concerns that Mindanao could be targeted by the extremist group Jemaah Islamiyah.

5. Briefing note: Australian National Security: Defence Update 2005A major review of Australia's national security has been released on the 15 December 2005 outlining current threats and challenges facing Australia and the measures the Howard Government is taking to keep Australia secure.
   Media Release 2005-12-15 Senator Hill, Minister for DefenceAustralia's National Security: Defence Update 2005.pdfStart Of $3 Billion Investment In Trucks and Trailers to 'Harden' The Army Media Release 2005-12-13 Senator Hill, Minister for Defence"The Hardened and Networked Army", Army Headquarters Army Weighs Heavy Duty, Geoffrey Barker, AFR*, 2005-12-12
   A bigger, harder army is welcome, but strategic questions remain unanswered: A central question is how far the decisions reflect a government reversal of the 2000 Defence White Paper decision against the development of heavy armoured forces suitable for contributions to coalition operations in high-density conflicts. Given the recent warning by Treasury secretary Ken Henry that defence will find it increasingly difficult to retain or increase its budget share, the boost to the army will have to come either at the expense of existing capability plans, or from an increase in defence funding.
   *subscription required Defence Eyes Huge Planes Brendan Nicholson, AAP, Age, 2005-12-15
   The Australian Defence Force has added several massive transport planes, each of which can carry one of the army's new 60-tonne Abrams tanks, to its Christmas shopping list. We Have To Bring Out The Big Guns, Alan Dupont, Australian, 2005-11-29 In this opinion piece, Dr Alan Dupont of the Lowy Institute details expectations of the upcoming 2005 strategic update and suggests that an army with greater firepower will improve national security. Strategic Insight 20 - Crunch Time: Planning Australia's Future Defence Force Mark Thomson, November 2005, ASPI*
   *subscription requiredContact editor: Jane Mullett
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