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1. E. Timor Sacks Hundreds of Troops Tim Johnston, BBC News, 2006-03-17 East Timor has sacked more than a third of its army after soldiers refused to end the month-long stand-off despite an offer by President Xanana Gusmao of a government inquiry. The dismissal of nearly 600 soldiers is a serious blow to the 1,400-strong force, set up after East Timor gained independence from Indonesia in 1999.

2. Indonesia: Investigate Escalating Violence in Papua, Allow Independent Monitors Access to Area Human Rights Watch, 2006-03-17 Escalating violence in Papua's provincial capital should be investigated by an independent commission
   - Police in Papua Must 'Calm Down', Jakarta Post, 2006-03-20
3.
4. How Shock and Awe Turned to Fear and Loathing in Iraq Brian Toohey, AFR*, 2006-03-18 Committing Australian troops to invade Iraq was radically flawed. Key policymaking weaknesses include: a willingness to act without the normal professional strategic advice; an almost casual disregard for long-established principles prohibiting invasions; confused rationales for the resort to force; cherrypicking intelligence for political purposes; and the lack of sceptical media. * Subscription required
5. Cost of War is High, but Affordable John Kerin, AFR*, 2006-03-18 Australia's involvement in Iraq will reach $1.7 billion if the troops stay to June 2007. This covers the cost of the 450-strong contingent at Al Muthanna in Iraq's south, which Defence Minister Brendan Nelson says could be redeployed to other duties later this year, another 200 at Baghdad headquarters protecting diplomats, and the 130-strong C-130 Hercules crew and support staff. * Subscription required
6. A Flight of Fancy: the Joint Strike Fighters Tom Allard, SMH, 2006-03-18 Australia is under pressure to honour a costly commitment to an increasingly dubious aircraft. There are three fundamental queries. Is the F-35 the right plane to help Australia retain its supremacy in the region's skies? Will delays in its delivery leave a yawning gap in Australia's air defences when the F-111s are retired in 2012? Did the Defence Force do rigorous due diligence on the F-35?
   - Joint Strike Fighter: DOD Plans to Enter Production before Testing Demonstrates Acceptable Performance, Government Accounting Organisation (GAO) Report to Congressional Committees, March 2006
   - Australian Participation on the Joint Strike Fighter Program, Department of Defence
7.
8. Afghan Endgame '20 Years Away' Christina Lamb and Patrick Walters, Australian, 2006-03-20 The objectives of the coalition mission to Afghanistan could take as long as 20 years to achieve, according to a confidential British Ministry of Defence briefing. The assessment by senior military officers highlights the risks to foreign troops, including Australians.
   - Defence Minister Dr Brendan Nelson Farewells Members of the 5th Aviation Regiment being deployed to Afghanistan, Ministerial Release 26/06, 2006-03-16
9.
10. Preemptive War, International Law and the 2006 National Security Strategy: Issue Brief Steven C. Welsh, Center of Defense Information (CDI), 2006-03-16 The USA has unveiled its second National Security Strategy (NSS). It explicitly includes a preemptive war doctrine within a section addressing weapons of mass destruction (WMD), with specific reference to the danger of WMD falling into the hands of terrorists.
    - Fact Sheet: the President's National Security Strategy, Office of the Press Secretary, Washington Post, 2006-03-16
    - The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, March 2006
11.
12. Key States Reaffirm Ridding the World of Nuclear Weapons Pugwash, 2006-03-02 A strong commitment to ridding the world of nuclear weapons was made by high-level representatives of 21 states at special forum at The Hague, March 2-3, convened by the Middle Powers Initiative

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