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Austral Peace and Security Net

Austral Peace and Security Network Bi-Weekly Report, from the Nautilus Institute at RMIT, Melbourne, Australia.

Thursday 23 March 2006

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1. [The Wheat Buck Stops Here](#)

Richard Baker, Age, 2006-03-23

How was John Howard able to tell Australians in March 2003 that Saddam Hussein was "cruelly and cynically" manipulating the UN oil-for-food program? The public need to know where this information came from and why the Government was unable to piece together all the information it had on Saddam's corruption of the UN program. At the time Howard made his 2003 statement, AWB was the biggest participant in the UN program.

2. [Searching For the Exit from Iraq](#)
Amin Saikal, Age, 2006-03-21 What the US needs is an exit strategy in which it can disentangle itself from Iraq without driving the rest of the region into greater turmoil. If managed in co-operation with Iraq's neighbours and the UN, a withdrawal from Iraq might achieve such an objective. The alternative could be a withdrawal as messy as the exit from Saigon in 1975.
 - [The Iraq War Is a Noble Cause, Greg Sheridan, Australian, 2006-03-23](#)
- 3.
4. [PNG: Government Ready to Welcome UN Intervention](#)
PINA, 2006-03-21 Papua New Guinea's Foreign Minister has welcomed the reported offer by the UN to help remove five former Fijian soldiers still in Bougainville's no-go zone area.
5. [Vietnam Cancers Linked to Water](#)
Simon Kearney, Australian, 2006-03-22 Sailors who served on naval ships during the Vietnam War have been told their ships' drinking water, which was contaminated with Agent Orange, could be causing their cancers. The Department of Veterans Affairs is investigating a link between the number of cancers among sailors and the desalinated water on board some ships which contained dioxins from the deadly defoliant.
 - [Examination Of The Potential Exposure Of Royal Australian Navy \(RAN\) Personnel To Polychlorinated Dibenzodioxins And Polychlorinated Dibenzofurans Via Drinking Water: A Report To The Department Of Veteran Affairs, Australia, The National Research Centre For Environmental Toxicology \(Entox\), Queensland Health Scientific Services \(QHSS\), December 2002 \(Released By DVA 2005\)](#)
 - [Commonwealth of Australia, Proof Committee Hansard, Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Legislation Committee, Estimates Hearings, 2006-02-15](#)
See Senator Hurley's questions about dioxins on Navy ships during the Vietnam War, pp. 120 - 126
 - The Politics of Agent Orange: The Australian Experience, Jock McCulloch, Melbourne: William Heinemann, 1984
- 6.
7. [Defence Minister Gets More Money](#)
Australian, March 21, 2006 Defence Minister Brendan Nelson has cleared the way for decisions to purchase the joint strike fighter and air warfare destroyers worth billions of dollars, after winning approval for a 3 per cent budget increase.
8. [Illegal Boats 'Plundering, Outwitting Coast Watch'](#)
Lindsay Murdoch, Age, 2006-03-22 Ian Munro, chief executive of Maningrida's Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation, said coast-watch planes fitted with sophisticated surveillance equipment had failed to detect wooden-hulled boats that Indonesian crews hid among mangroves by day. Mr Munro said a properly funded Sea Ranger network could detect every illegal boat landing on the northern coast.
 - [Indigenous Sea Rangers, ABC, Stateline, Northern Territory, 2006-02-24](#)
 - [Sea Rangers Safeguarding, SBS Television, Living Black, 2005-11-05](#)
- 9.
10. [Nuclear Safety Net Must Remain Strong](#)
Russell Trood, AFR*, 2006-03-22 Australia should engage India on a wide agenda, but it can wait for our uranium. Canberra should use its good standing within the non-proliferation community to press hard for international action. Aiming for the international community to recommit itself to non-proliferation rules that can accommodate the new era, and stop individual nations such as

Iran, and India and the US, for that matter, seeking to rewrite the rules to suit their own purposes.

* Subscription required

11. [Call for NZ and US to Cooperate More in the Pacific](#)

PINA, Tuesday: March 21, 2006 US Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill says the US wants to co-operate more with New Zealand in the Pacific. Mr Hill said development of the Pacific's island states was of concern to the US.

12. [Defence Bidder on Spy Charge, AFP](#)

Australian, 2006-03-22 A top executive of the French company seeking control of Australia's leading defence manufacturer has been arrested for espionage in South Korea. The statement from Thales said the French company had invested heavily in South Korea and maintained "the very best of relations with its Korean military customers".

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