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Monday 8 May 2006

1. Fresh Australian Troops for Southern Iraq
2. Extra Australian Troops for Afghanistan
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7. PM Sogavare Replies to Downer
8. US Wants ANZUS Shipshape

1. Fresh Troops for Southern Iraq, AAP, Australian, 2006-05-08Australian troops will go to Iraq in a third rotation of the Al Muthanna Task Group. Dr Nelson said the 470 troops would stay for 6 months and provide security for the Japanese Iraq Reconstruction and Support Group and assist in the training of Iraqi Army units. If the Japanese withdraw in the future, "well then we are disposed to redeploying our troops to undertake further training of Iraqi security forces and other roles in southern Iraq," he said.
2. Extra Troops for Afghanistan, AAP, Australian, 2006-05-08A 240-member ADF reconstruction team would head to Afghanistan from July, Prime Minister John Howard said today. The team

will be based in Afghanistan's Oruzgan Province and operate with a Netherlands task group. "It will work on reconstruction and community based projects as part of Australia's commitment to securing a stable and democratic future for Afghanistan," he said.

3. Iraq Afghan Wars Cost US 439 Billion So Far, Pamela Hess, SpaceWar.com, 2006-05-05A new report from the US Congressional Research Service puts the cost of the global war on terrorism at least at $368 billion - not counting the requests now before Congress.
   - The Cost of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Other Global War on Terror Operations Since 9/11, Amy Belasco, Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Trade Division Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, 2006-04-24 [PDF]
   - Country Reports on Terrorism 2005, US Department of State, Publication 11324, Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, April 2006
4.
5. Fleeing Dili Residents Begin to Return Following Reassurances, Lindsay Murdoch, Age, 2006-0--08Some of the thousands of residents who fled their homes started returning after President Xanana Gusmao, PM Mari Alkariti and two Catholic bishops made public statements urging them not to believe rumours that have been circulating. Mr Ramos Horta said he was confident that the UN Security Council would approve his request to keep UN police in East Timor in the lead-up to national elections next year.
6. Former Guerillas Demand E Timor They Fought For, Stephen Fitzpatrick, Australian, 2006-05-08The would-be guerilla fighters in highlands far beyond East Timor's capital, Dili, are a mixed lot but they have one thing in common: they're prepared to die violent deaths to get what they want. They have issued a demand that the Government of Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri be sacked and the country's tiny armed forces be made to hand in its weapons. Non-compliance will mean armed action, they promise.
7. Separatists Do Not Represent All Papuans, Dino Kusnadi, First Secretary, Embassy Of The Republic Of Indonesia, AFR*, 2006-05-04I appreciate Brian Toohey's attempt to write a history of Papua but it should also mention the decolonisation process of Papua, which is a vital part of Papua's integration with Indonesia. Papua is an inseparable part of Indonesia and the only way to move forward is to ensure that the country's hard-earned democracy works for all Indonesians, including the native Papuans.
   * Subscription required.
   - West Papua's Long Search For Identity, Brian Toohey, AFR*, 2006-04-29
     * Subscription required.
   - Jakarta Accuses Australian Academics On West Papua, Sarah Smiles, Age, 2006-05-08
8.
9. PM Sogavare Replies to Downer, Solomon Islands Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, Press Release, 2005-05-07The diplomatic relations between Solomon Islands and Australia is governed by the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations which forms part of Solomon Islands law by virtue of the Diplomatic Privileges and Immunities Act 1978.The critical comments of Minister Downer not only fall totally outside the terms of that protocol but amounts to serious act of interference with the domestic affairs of Solomon Islands.
   - Two Jailed MPs Named in Solomons Cabinet, AAP, SMH, 2006-05-05
10.
11. US Wants ANZUS Shipshape, Tony Walker, AFR*, 2006-05-08The US has signalled that it wants to bolster the ANZUS partnership by putting aside a 20-year dispute about visits by nuclear-propelled warships to New Zealand ports. Christopher Hill, the Assistant Secretary of State for

East Asia and Pacific Affairs, said the US wanted to draw New Zealand back into a closer defence relationship after years of distance.
* Subscription required.

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