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Thursday 3 May 2007

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6. Fiji Says It's Within Its Rights to Extend Emergency Regulations
7. Exclusive Interview: Blackwater USA's President Gary Jackson
8. Fraser Damns 'Inhumane' PM

1. Billion-Dollar Windfall for Military, Geoffrey Barker, AFR*, 2007-05-03The defence budget is set to leap by about $1 billion to as much as $21 billion this year. Experts say the increase will not provide enough money to operate present and planned new defence equipment over future years. Even the generous budget this year will fall billions of dollars short of projected spending over the decade.
   * Subscription required.
   - The Final Straw: Are our Defence Forces Overstretched? Mark Thomson, ASPI, 2007-05-03

[PDF]

- Budget Overview 2006-7, Enhancing Defence Capabilities, Australian Department of Defence, 2006

2.
3. Jakarta Visit to Boost Fight against People Smugglers, Cath Hart, Australian, 2007-05-01Immigration Minister Kevin Andrews will discuss strategies to boost Australia's co-operation with Indonesia to stop people smuggling with government officials. He will meet with Indonesian Minister for Law and Human Rights Dr Hamid Awaludin, Foreign Minister Hassan Wirajuda, the International Migration Organisation and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.
4. Two Face Court over Terror Funds, Reko Rennie, Age, 2007-05-01Two Melbourne men have faced court accused of raising money for a terrorist group. Both are charged with offences relating to being a member of a terrorist organisation, making funds available to a terrorist organisation and intentionally providing support to a terrorist organisation. The raids were part of a joint investigation by the AFP and Victoria Police into claims charity groups were raising funds for Sri Lanka's "Tamil Tigers".
5. Moti Affair Won't Be Resolved until Diplomacy Resumes: PNG, Steve Marshall, ABC, 2007-05-01Papua New Guinea's Foreign Minister says Australia cannot expect any answers about the Julian Moti affair until full diplomatic contact between the two countries is restored. Diplomatic relations between the two countries unravelled when Moti avoided extradition to Australia by being flown to the Solomon Islands on board a PNG Defence Force plane.
6. Australian Government Response to the Report of the Inquiry into Certain Australian Companies in relation to the UN Oil-for-Food Programme, Australian Attorney-Generals Department, 2007-05-03The first 3 recommendations have been accepted. Public inquiries have started for recommendations 4 and 5. The Government accepts that the Cole Inquiry raised important questions in relation to legal professional privilege and its impact on Commonwealth investigations which require further consideration. The established Task Force, AFP, ASIC and the Victorian Police are working on findings of possible criminal conduct.
   - Report of the Inquiry into Certain Australian Companies in Relation to the UN Oil-for-Food Programme (Cole Inquiry), November 2006

7.
8. Fiji's Interim Attorney General Says It's Within Its Rights to Extend Emergency Regulations, RNZI, 2007-05-02Fiji announced an extension of emergency regulations - the fifth such move since the coup in December last year. Last month Fiji's delegation to the European Union in Brussels said it would end the restrictions [after May 2007] unless there were threats to national security, public order and safety.
   - Aussie Aid Workers Hurt in Fiji, Michael McKenna, Australian, 2007-05-02

9.
10. Exclusive Interview: Blackwater USA's President Gary Jackson, R J Hillhouse, The Spy Who Billed Me, 2007-04-26Blackwater USA is one of the world's largest private military corporations, offering a wide array of security services, including, but not limited to training for law enforcement and military personnel, professional security details protecting against military-level threats, logistical support, as well as peacekeeping and stability operations. In military circles, Blackwater has a reputation for excellence, reliability and strong management. To the rest of the world, Blackwater is an enigma.
    - Whining Imperialists, Saul Landau, ZNet, 2007-04-30

11.
12. Fraser Damns 'Inhumane' PM, Sarah Smiles, Age, 2007-05-01Former Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser has accused the Howard Government of abandoning the rule of law and behaving like a "tyrannical regime". Mr Fraser described the conflict in Iraq as war "without analysis, thought or reason" that has caused enormous damage and fuelled terrorism.
    - Australians: What Are We? How Do We See Ourselves? How Do Others See Us? Malcolm Fraser, ANU - Public Lecture Series 2007, 2007-04-30

13.

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