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Thursday 14 June 2007

1. Pine Gap: Jury Considers Verdict for Christian Pacifists
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7. The Air Warfare Destroyer Project - Decision Time

Special Report 07-14S - Assessing China's ASAT Program - Desmond Ball

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1. Jury Considers Verdict for Christian Pacifists, ABC, 2007-06-14A Supreme Court jury is considering its verdict for a group of Christian pacifists charged over their entry into the Pine Gap Joint Defence Facility near Alice Springs. Adele Goldie, Bryan Law, Jim Dowling and Donna Mulhearn are charged with damaging Commonwealth property and entering a prohibited area in December 2005. Justice Sally Thomas ruled out the defences the accused put forward saying they do not justify breaking the law.

- Joint Australian-US Intelligence Facilities, Australian Forces Abroad, Nautilus Institute, 2007-06-02
- The American Connection, Alice Springs, Northern Territory Government

2.
3. Exercise Talisman Saber 2007, Defence Department, 2007-02-27The field training portion of Talisman Saber 2007 will be conducted 19 June - 2 July 2007, with force preparation and deployment of forces 12 -18 June 2007. Indicative Australian forces to participate are 20 ships, 25 aircraft and 7500 personnel. Indicative US forces to take part are 10 ships (including a carrier Battle Group), 100 aircraft and 20,000 personnel.
   - US, Aust to Build Massive NT Airfield, ABC, 2007-05-31
   - Briefing Note: Expansion and Upgrading of Joint Australia-US Training Facilities, APSNet, 2006-06-19
   - Shoalwater Peace Convergence, Peace Convergence

4.
5. East Timor: Military Report Questioned, Sen Lam with Jim Dunn, ABC, 2007-06-08 [Audio]An advisor to East Timor President Jose Ramos-Horta has questioned the accuracy of an Australian newspaper story about the so-called 'Force 2020 Report'. Jim Dunn, advisor to the East Timor President, says the report does exist, but it is not the only possible plan under consideration.
   - E Timor Defiant on Boost to Forces, Mark Dodd, Australian, 2007-06-14

6.
7. US to Arm Sunni Insurgents in Iraq, Anne Davies and John Burns, Age, 2007-06-12With the four-month-old "surge" showing only modest success in curbing insurgent attacks, US commanders are turning to another strategy fraught with risk: arming Sunni Arab groups that have promised to fight al-Qaeda-linked militants who have been their allies in the past. US commanders say they have successfully approached Sunni groups in Anbar province.
   - Arming Iraq's Sunni Insurgents, Lionel Beehner, Council on Foreign Relations, 2007-06-13
   - Iraq: The Question, Rory Stewart, New York Review of Books, 2007-05-31

8.
9. Indian Troops to Fight Taliban, Bruce Loudon, Australian, 2007-06-12India is doubling its deployment of highly trained commandos to combat the Taliban insurgency in Afghanistan. The commandos come from the crack Indo-Tibetan Border Police force that specialises in high-altitude operations in the Himalayas, are being sent to guard about 300 Indian road builders working on the 218km Zaranj-Delaram highway, which will connect Afghanistan's second city, Kandahar, with the Iranian border.
   - Coalition Forces, Australia in Afghanistan, Nautilus Insitute, 2007-03-27

10.
11. RAAF's Eye in the Sky Guarding Iraq Convoys, Brendan Nicholson, Age, 2007-06-08Australian maritime patrol planes packed with high-tech instruments are helping protect coalition road convoys in Iraq. The RAAF P-3 Orions, which fly ahead of the coalition convoys, have already picked up several of the so-called "improvised explosive devices". The aircraft's land-surveillance role has been kept largely secret since they were fitted with sophisticated anti-missile systems for the Iraq operations.
12. The Air Warfare Destroyer Project - Decision Time, Andrew Davies, ASPI, 2007-06-14The building of three Air Warfare Destroyers for the RAN is one of the largest Defence decisions the

government will make. The field has been narrowed to two competitors. The government has a hard choice to make, and must balance the warfighting capability to be acquired and the risk to the project of demanding requirements.
    - Navy Faces the $10 Billion Question, Paul Dibb, SMH, 2007-06-11

13.

Special Report 07-14S: Assessing China's ASAT Program, Desmond Ball

Desmond Ball of the Australian National University discusses China's anti-satellite (ASAT) test of 11 January 2007, and outlines the history of US and Russian anti-satellite testing. Ball provides detailed account of the current Chinese programme, and the vulnerabilities of different satellite constellations to kinetic energy, laser, and radio frequency weapons. The Chinese test, writes Ball,"involved a fairly primitive system. It is the sort of capability available to any country with a store of MRBMs/IRBMs (medium range/inter-continental ballistic missiles) or satellite launch vehicles, and a long-range radar system, such as Japan, India, Pakistan, Iran and even North Korea. American satellites are lucrative targets in the Chinese strategy of asymmetric warfare." Ball concludes by noting that, "China has been a prominent advocate of the 'prevention of an arms race in outer space' (PAROS). In one move, albeit fairly primitive, it has provided a major stimulus to such a race."

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