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It covers (1) U.S. Federal government documents, especially those from executive branch departments and those from the Congressional branch - - Committees, the U.S. General Accounting Office, and the Congressional Budget Office; (2) policy briefs from major private think tanks, especially those in Washington; and (3) major reports from national professional associations. A few new high quality, high relevance think tank-sponsored books are also listed.

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Reports

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After the Arab Spring - Part II. YaleGlobal. Daniel Bethlehem. September 23, 2011.

Statehood for Palestine in name only won't ensure peace, equal footing with Israel and policies that serve the people living within those borders. "A balance of dignity between the parties is a necessary step towards a more durable accommodation," writes Daniel Bethlehem. With statehood designation for Palestine, international law would guide the Palestinian-Israeli relationship, providing "an equality, and a clarity, of law and of legal obligation that would apply to both sides." The status quo is unsustainable, and supported by many nations, statehood for Palestine is inevitable. Yet a reasonable process and responsibility are essential, too. If Palestinian statehood promotes dialogue over conflict, security over vulnerability, peace over division, it will be welcomed by the world.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/after-arab-spring-part-ii> [HTML format, various paging].

Item#2

After the Arab Spring - Part III. YaleGlobal. Dilip Hiro. September 26, 2011.

The Arab Spring has ushered in new attitudes throughout the Middle East and North Africa. series. In country after country, citizens have engaged in peaceful demonstrations, yearning for representative government that balances Islam with democracy and rejecting dictatorships that put foreign interests over that of citizens. In searching for a model of representational government, citizens need look no further than Turkey with its secular constitution, civilian-controlled military, growing economy and the popular Recep Tayyip Erdoğan administration, contends author Dilip Hiro. With vision and concern for fairness, Erdoğan has skillfully navigated what have long been political landmines for fellow NATO member, the United States. "Erdoğan has combined his backing for the Arab Spring with his advocacy for Palestine to be accorded the status of a sovereign state by the United Nations," Hiro writes. Increasingly isolated by the rapid change, Israel and the United States must strive for new partnerships in the region.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/after-arab-spring-%E2%80%93-part-iii> [HTML format, various paging].

Item#3

The Benefits and Limitations of Income Tax Reform. American Enterprise Institute. Alan D. Viard and Alex Brill. September 27, 2011.

A number of recent proposals have called for broadening the individual income tax base while lowering statutory income tax rates. Such proposals would eliminate or curtail various preferential income tax provisions and use some or all of the resulting revenue to lower statutory tax rates. Base broadening must be approached with caution because some base-broadening measures make the tax system less neutral, impeding economic efficiency. Also, income tax base broadening cannot eliminate, and may even reinforce, the income tax's central flaw--its penalty on saving, according to the Outlook.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://www.aei.org/docLib/TPO-Sept-2011.pdf> [PDF format, 6 pages].

Item#4

China - Leader or Laggard on the Path to a Secure, Low-Carbon Energy Future? Center for Strategic & International Studies. Sarah O. Ladislaw and Jane Nakano. September 26, 2011.

There has been a great deal of talk about whether and how China will manage its need to provide enough energy to ensure continued economic growth while avoiding the local and global environmental impacts of its energy production and use. To listen to the political discourse, China is either a global leader on clean energy technologies and transformation or the largest source of emissions with serious, systemic local environmental degradation. How can it at once be a low-carbon leader and a laggard?

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

http://csis.org/files/publication/110923_Ladislaw_ChinaLeaderLaggard_Web.pdf [PDF format, 54 pages].

Item#5

The Global Exploration Roadmap. International Global Exploration Coordination Group. September 22, 2011.

NASA is releasing the initial version of a Global Exploration Roadmap (GER) developed by the International Space Exploration Coordination Group. This roadmap is the culmination of work by 12 space agencies, including NASA, during the past year to advance coordinated space exploration. The roadmap identifies two potential pathways: "Asteroid Next" and "Moon Next." Each pathway represents a mission scenario that covers a 25-year period with a logical sequence of robotic and human missions. Both pathways were deemed practical approaches to address common high-level exploration goals developed by the participating agencies, recognizing that individual preferences among them may vary.

http://www.nasa.gov/pdf/591067main_GER_2011_small_single.pdf [PDF format, 44 pages].

Item#6

Improving Student Outcomes: Restoring America's Education Potential. Brookings Institution. Michael Greenstone and Adam Looney. The Hamilton Project, Brookings Institution. September 2011.

For decades, investments in public education have boosted U.S. productivity and earnings, forged a path out of poverty for many families, helped disadvantaged students narrow the learning gap with their peers, and developed a workforce that continues to be among the most productive and innovative on Earth. More recently, this engine of growth has lost momentum. While per-pupil spending has continued to rise, educational attainment and performance have stagnated over the last thirty years. Because workforce skills are closely linked to productivity and compensation, the stagnation in education has contributed to static or even declining earnings for many Americans. In this paper, The Hamilton Project provides a dual-track approach to improving future educational outcomes: 1) tackling structural barriers to unlock the largest gains in student achievement and 2) in the near term, implementing relatively simple cost-effective reforms that improve student performance.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/papers/2011/09_education_greenstone_looney_shevlin/092011_education_greenstone_looney_shevlin.pdf [PDF format, 32 pages].

Item#7

Making the Transition: From Middle-Income to Advanced Economies. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Alejandro Foxley and Fernando Sossdorf. September 21, 2011.

In order to for middle-income countries to successfully transition into advanced economies, their policymakers should look at the lessons learned by countries that successfully made the jump. Few middle-income countries have successfully transitioned into advanced economies in the past twenty years. As the world struggles with a new economic slowdown, middle-income countries should look at the lessons from the economies that successfully made the jump. The more successful countries in the bunch, particularly Finland and South Korea, set themselves apart from the rest by investing early in improving the quality of education and inducing high investment in research and development. By opening up to world trade and using tax incentives and access to subsidized credit, successful countries were able to attract foreign direct investment in high-technology sectors. And to allow for continued growth, Finland and South Korea were able to turn financial crises into opportunities to undertake much-needed economic reforms, this was only possible because there were broad political and social agreements on the essential elements for sustaining high growth rates.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

http://www.carnegieendowment.org/files/making_the_transition.pdf [PDF format, 42 pages].

Item#8

Obama Draws More Confidence than GOP Leaders on Deficit. Pew Research Center for the People & the Press. September 26, 2011.

As the nation prepares for another round of deficit reduction debates, the public's confidence in congressional leaders, particularly Republican leaders in Congress, has plummeted. Just 35% say they have a great deal or fair amount of confidence in Republican leaders in Congress to do the right thing when it comes to dealing with the federal budget deficit, down from 47% in May. Fully 62% say they have little or no confidence in the Republican leaders on this issue.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://people-press.org/files/legacy-pdf/9-26-11%20Deficit%20Confidence%20Release.pdf> [PDF format, 8 pages].

Item#9

The Power and Pitfalls of Education Incentives. The Hamilton Project, Brookings Institution, Bradley M. Alllan and Roland Fryer. September 2011.

There is widespread agreement that America's school system is in desperate need of reform, but many educational interventions are ineffective, expensive, or difficult to implement. Recent incentive programs, however, demonstrate that well-designed rewards to students can improve achievement at relatively low costs. Fryer and Allan draw on school-based field experiments with student and teacher incentives to offer a series of guidelines for designing successful educational incentive programs.

http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/papers/2011/09_incentives_fryer_allen/092011_incentives_fryer_allen_paper.pdf [PDF format, 36 pages].

Item#10

Putin's Return. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Matthew Rojansky. September 26, 2011.

Vladimir Putin plans to return as Russia's president after elections in March and could remain in the position until 2024. President Dmitri Medvedev is expected to swap positions with Putin and serve as Russia's next prime minister. In a Q&A, Matthew Rojansky analyzes Putin's return and what it means for Russia and its international relations. Rojansky argues that Putin's new term will largely bring a continuation of the status quo. While Putin's grip on power will arouse anxieties in the West, he will not undo the U.S.-Russia reset and, for now, this is largely good news for the West.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://carnegieendowment.org/2011/09/26/putin-s-return/58pb> [HTML format, various paging].

Item#11

Unauthorized Aliens Residing in the United States: Estimates Since 1986. Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress. Ruth Ellen Wasem. September 22, 2011.

Estimates derived from the March Supplement of the U.S. Census Bureau's Current Population Survey (CPS) indicate that the unauthorized resident alien population (commonly referred to as illegal aliens) rose from 3.2 million in 1986 to 11.2 million in 2010. Jeffrey Passel, a demographer with the Pew Hispanic Research Center, has been involved in making these estimations since he worked at the U.S. Bureau of the Census in the 1980s. The estimated number of unauthorized aliens had dropped to 1.9 million in 1988 following passage of a 1986 law that legalized several million unauthorized aliens. The estimates of unauthorized aliens peaked at an estimated 12.4 million in 2007. About 39% of unauthorized alien residents in 2010 were estimated to have entered the United States in 2000 or later. Similarly, the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Immigration Statistics (OIS) reported an estimated 10.8 million unauthorized alien residents as of January 2010, up from 8.5 million in January 2000.

<http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/174245.pdf> [PDF format, 17 pages].