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The Rule of Law

1. OBAMA AND AFRICA: MATCHING EXPECTATIONS TO REALITY

Lyman, Princeton; Robinette, Kathryn

Journal of International Affairs, vol. 62, no. 2, Spring/Summer 2009, pp. 1-18

Lyman, an adjunct senior fellow for Africa policy studies at the Council on Foreign Relations, writes that the election of President Obama aroused expectations in Africa that will be hard to meet. Obama has the advantage of following successful Bush policies in Africa, which tripled aid and provided care to millions of AIDS sufferers. But Obama must preserve Bush's gains: if aid to Africa remains static, he cannot respond to problems with food security, the HIV/AIDS pandemic and meeting the UN's Millennium Development Goals. Obama will also have to address climate change, counterterrorism and peacekeeping, and resolve conflicts in Sudan and Darfur. Then, there are two things Obama must do to create a legacy of his own: First, Obama can inspire personal and institutional responsibility in Africa, and make accountability and democracy the theme of his visits. He should provide resources to good governments and institutions that foster democracy, and prosecute organizations that illegally bribe African governments. Second, Obama can develop a new trade agenda with Africa -- he should declare Africa a single trading zone, provide technical assistance necessary to develop its trade capacity, and work to open markets in India, China and Brazil.

2. PROTECTING THE PROTECTORS: NGO ACTION AND THE RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT

Benjamin, Dave

International Journal on World Peace, vol. 26, no. 1, March 2009, pp. 31-50

According to Benjamin, assistant professor of international political economy at the University of Bridgeport in Connecticut, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs) are facing increasing threats as internal conflict in states rises. Benjamin says that as NGOs and INGOs play a bigger role in shaping international humanitarian policy, they become more vulnerable. Because NGOs have no official ties to any government, Benjamin says they cannot rely on protection by the UN or under international law. Benjamin also notes that NGOs can fall prey to internal conflicts, and often fall into the habit of promoting reforms based on Western economic models and can overlook local, older social structures and norms. He notes that NGOs and INGOs walk a fine line between humanitarian intervention and cultural chauvinism; they are playing an increasingly important role in shaping the framework for countries with internal conflicts. Despite the pitfalls, Benjamin says NGOs and INGOs have great potential for "preserving the peace, protecting the vulnerable, and securing humanity's common future," and for this reason, they should be afforded the same protections as states and individuals.

3. PUBLIC WATCHDOGS OR IMPERIAL PITBULLS: AN EVALUATION OF SPECIAL PROSECUTOR INVESTIGATIONS OF EXECUTIVE BRANCH MISCONDUCT

Caruson, Kiki

The author, Associate professor of political science at the University of South Florida, Tampa, discusses the role of the special prosecutor, also called an independent counsel, who is appointed by the Attorney General or Congress to investigate a government official for misconduct while in office. The individual is picked for this appointment from outside government, to avoid potential conflicts of interest or political connections to the incumbent administration. Critics of the use of special prosecutors argue that these investigators act as a "Fourth Branch" to the government because they are not subject to limitations in spending or have deadlines to meet. Caruson discusses the legislation providing authority to special prosecutors and analyzes what she considers the charge of a lack of accountability by measuring the cost, duration, and expansion of jurisdiction of each special counsel investigation.

4. TAKING THE HILL

Bai, Matt

New York Times Magazine, June 7, 2009, pp. 30//47

Sometime this summer, Congress and the White House will try to put together a comprehensive health care reform package. For Barack Obama, this signals the end of the eventful prologue to his presidency. Impressive as they are, Obama's legislative victories so far have been easily accomplished, for a popular new president installed at a time of economic crisis and supported by comfortable majorities in the House and Senate. A new health care system, on the other hand, is a legislative goal that has eluded every Democratic president since Harry Truman. Making good on his campaign promise will require not just public expenditure on a mammoth scale but also the kind of activism and creativity at which Washington hasn't succeeded for generations. Health-care spending in the U.S. nearly doubled in the decade after Clinton's plan died, reaching about 16 percent of the gross domestic product, the highest percentage on record. Some businesses that might have opposed reform in 1993 are now desperate to address their growing health care costs, and insurance companies and health care providers seem increasingly open to compromise if it means they can avoid more drastic forms of government regulation. Currently available online at <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/07/magazine/07congress-t.html>

5. TINFOIL UNDERWEAR

Fallows, James

Atlantic Monthly, May 2009

The author notes that there is no privacy on the Internet; the question is how to control the lack of privacy and the threats it may pose. Cookies, old files, browsing histories, are easy for users to control, and encrypting utilities work pretty well against eavesdropping. But it is "the inexorable pileup of information" on a variety of Web sites that experts identify as the major long-term threat to a user's privacy. Your IIP addresses allow tracking of all your Internet activities, and the companies that collect and own that data have decided to retain it more or less forever. The technical developments that make this possible cannot easily be undone, but the business policies could be, Fallows says. Online firms, however, are disinclined to reveal everything they know about their users – this would be commercial suicide. Nonetheless, many experts believe that government legislation offers modern computer users their best hope. For instance, a future law might require Google and other companies to strip specific IP addresses from records of searching or browsing activity that they intended to store for more than a brief period. This would be a balancing act similar to the creation of the "do-not-call" list for telemarketers. It would preserve the legitimate commercial value of aggregate data about Internet use, while protecting individuals if the records were dredged up in legal proceedings — or simply lost, stolen, or

exposed through negligence or incompetence. Currently available online at <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200605/internet-privacy>

6. WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT MODERNIZATION

Inglehart, Ronald; Welzel, Christian
Foreign Affairs, vol. 88, no. 2, March-April 2009

The authors write that, although democracies are in retreat in some developing countries, evidence shows that over time democracy emerges from modernization. Inglehart and Welzel, coauthors of MODERNIZATION, CULTURAL CHANGE, AND DEMOCRACY, say industrialization brings about rapid economic growth and other changes that transform behavior. High levels of development make people more tolerant and trusting, promoting self-expression and participation in making decisions, including political decisions. “This means that the economic resurgence of China and Russia has a positive aspect: underlying changes are occurring that make the emergence of increasingly liberal and democratic political systems likely in the coming years,” they note. Modernization does not go on indefinitely; each phase of modernization effects some changes to people’s world views. It does not weaken religious and ethnic traditions or lead to westernization. Nor does it lead to democracy automatically; democracy emerges as highly educated people increasingly think for themselves and change their behavior. At some point democracy becomes hard to avoid “because repressing mass demands for more open societies becomes increasingly costly and detrimental to economic effectiveness.” Currently available online at <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/64821/ronald-inglehart-and-christian-welzel/how-development-leads-to-democracy?page=show>

Economics and Trade

7. BUILDING BRIDGES TO CHINA

Schuman, Michael
Time Magazine, Asia edition, vol. 173, no. 20, May 25, 2009, p. 22

Taiwan President Ma Ying-jeou has done more to improve ties with China than any of his predecessors, wrote Schuman, a global economics columnist for Time. After Ma’s party, the Kuomintang, fled China in 1949 after losing to Mao’s communists, Taiwan was blocked from receiving diplomatic recognition and attending international forums, and cross-strait contact was severely restricted. But since Ma took office in 2008, direct flights to Taiwan have been established, investment regulations have been loosened, and this year Taiwan was invited to observe at the World Health Assembly. Ma promises to further strengthen Taiwan’s economy through links to China, by pushing to reduce tariffs on Taiwanese exports, and securing investment guarantees and intellectual property rights. But improving cross-strait relations has political risks: Many Taiwan residents do not consider themselves a part of China, and worry closer ties will lead to a loss of identity or sovereignty. Ma has not called for independence for Taiwan, unlike his predecessor Chen Shui-bian, which accounts for some of his success. But Ma has also rejected negotiations about unification, and will not negotiate a peace treaty until China removes missiles pointed at Taiwan. Currently available online at <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1898215,00.html>

8. DENG UNDONE: THE COSTS OF HALTING MARKET REFORM IN CHINA

Scissors, Derek
Foreign Affairs, vol. 88, no. 3, May-June 2009

A research fellow at the Heritage Foundation, Scissors argues that China's leaders, obsessed with promoting economic expansion, have reversed market reforms attained over 30 years and reasserted state control of the economy in many ways. China has reversed price liberalization, privatization, and competition policy, and has started restricting incoming foreign investment and taxing exports. The U.S. and Chinese economies are tightly bound – U.S. imports from China amount to about 7.7 percent of all Chinese output, and the Chinese are Americans' biggest foreign creditors by far. Broad financial reform in China would benefit the United States, but merely ending exchange rate manipulation would not necessarily do so. A better objective for the Obama administration would be pressing China to let foreign investment move in and out freely. "By forcing financial policy to respond to market behavior, it could considerably reduce state intervention in the Chinese economy," Scissors writes. Currently available online at <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/64947/derek-scissors/deng-undone>

9. THE END OF PLENTY: THE GLOBAL FOOD CRISIS

Bourne Joel K., Jr.

National Geographic, June 2009

This special report reviews in-depth the problem of how to feed a world that is consuming more food than farmers have been producing. The combination of several factors has led to the current global food crisis. Populations in many poor countries are burgeoning, and consumers in countries experiencing new economic growth are eating more meat. There are growing demands for grain for food, animal feed and fuel. Global warming has restrained growth in yields by depleting water and soil resources. As a result, food prices have risen dramatically, and global grain reserves have dropped to record lows; the author notes that these factors ensure that food prices are not coming down soon. Although controversial, some are calling for another "green revolution", involving new seed varieties and environmentally-sound uses of fertilizer, pesticides and irrigation; it must include Africa, Bourne writes, and in half the time of it took for the first revolution that led to a reduction in widespread hunger in Asia in the 1960s and 1970s. An increasing awareness of the importance of agricultural development has led to more investing in that area by international donors and by some countries -- like Malawi -- whose leaders want to turn their nations into surplus producers. Currently available online at <http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2009/06/cheap-food/bourne-text>

10. FORGING A SECOND AMERICAN CENTURY

Engler, John

Forbes, May 28, 2009

In this series of stories called "Made in America," Engler, former three-term Michigan governor and current president of the National Association of Manufacturers, argues that American manufacturing will survive. The United States, he notes, remains the world's largest manufacturing nation, accounting for more than 19.5 percent of global manufacturing output. Although 1.5 million manufacturing jobs have been lost, more than 12 million remain and manufacturing represent 11.6 percent of the U.S. gross domestic product. The bad news is that higher taxes, energy and regulatory costs place U.S. manufacturers at a disadvantage compared to their foreign competitors. The good news is that competition hones better manufacturing processes, and, as manufacturing become more automated, lower labor costs in places like China and India are less important in the competitive picture. Currently available online at <http://www.forbes.com/2009/05/27/john-engler-manufacturing-business-america.html>

11. THE G2 MIRAGE: WHY THE UNITED STATES AND CHINA ARE NOT READY TO UPGRADE TIES

Economy, Elizabeth; Segal, Adam
Foreign Affairs, vol. 88, no. 3, May-June 2009

Economy and Segal, senior fellows at the Council on Foreign Relations, argue that the U.S. and China are still too far apart in many ways to succeed by themselves in solving global problems. Without doubt they are key players in resolving problems of economics, environment, and stability. Nonetheless, pursuing solutions through an elevated bilateral relationship will only reveal mismatched interests, values, and capabilities; China's need for resources and markets, for example, clashes with Western goals for improving human rights and governance in the developing world. China's authoritarian yet decentralized government and lack of transparency makes cooperation difficult on food and product safety problems. What the U.S. should do, instead of elevating its bilateral relationship with China, is to invite Europe, Japan, and other important countries in Asia to coordinate policies toward China. "Throughout the world, countries are realizing that the issues that currently define their relationships with Beijing cannot simply be negotiated bilaterally," the authors write. Currently available online at <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/64946/elizabeth-c-economy-and-adam-segal/the-g-2-mirage>

12. IT'S OFFICIAL – THE ERA OF CHEAP OIL IS OVER

Klare, Michael
The Nation, posted June 11, 2009

Every summer, the Energy Information Administration (EIA) of the U.S. Department of Energy issues its International Energy Outlook, a data-packed assessment of the global energy situation. This year's report contained a statement of great significance: the EIA predicts a sharp drop in future global oil production. Klare notes that the EIA, which in past years has scoffed at the notion of impending global petroleum shortages, is now finally coming around to the conclusion that many experts have been warning about for years – that the era of cheap and plentiful oil is drawing to a close. While the EIA predicts that production of unconventional fuels will increase to fill the shortfall, Klare and others are doubtful that they will bridge the gap, given the large investments required and the tremendous adverse environmental impact. The EIA's report also highlights the insatiable demand for energy in Asia, and the fact that China will before long overtake the U.S. as the world's largest energy consumer, at which point it will be in a position to influence global energy policy and markets. Available online at <http://www.thenation.com/doc/20090629/klare>

13. LAST MAN STANDING

Cowen, Tyler
Wilson Quarterly, vol. 33, no. 2, Spring 2009, pp. 55-58

The author, a professor of economics at George Mason University, believes that although America's relative decline in global affairs has been foretold many times, it never quite seems to happen. Today, the rest of the world is looking to the U.S. to pull it out of a recession (or depression), even though many blame us for having started it. The truth is that the worse things get for the world as a whole, the more the U.S. gains in relative power and influence. The U.S. has more demographics than many countries; with its relatively unified system of governance, the U.S. Federal Reserve can simply print money to fund bailouts, and even if that is an ugly alternative, the government's ability to act underpins the credibility of the system as a whole. The European Central Bank (ECB) is explicitly banned from creating more euros for bank bailouts;

the Swiss central bank could, but the prospect of the resulting inflation and rapid depreciation of the Swiss franc makes this an unappealing choice, especially for a country that has marketed itself as a financial haven. It's not widely recognized that Europe, because of its systemic weaknesses, already has required implicit bailouts by the U.S. European financial institutions are prominent on the list of creditors of the failed insurance company AIG. Few U.S. financial regulators would say it openly, but one reason why the Fed rescued AIG was that it knew that European regulators could not handle the fallout from an AIG collapse. Currently available online at http://www.wilsoncenter.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=wq.essay&essay_id=517090

14. RESHAPING THE WORLD ORDER: HOW WASHINGTON SHOULD REFORM INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Brooks, Stephen; Wohlforth, William

Foreign Affairs, vol. 88, no. 2, March-April 2009, pp. 49-63

The authors, academics at Dartmouth College, propose a strategic approach rather than a recipe for reform and present the case for Washington leading the reform process. They believe that the existing architecture is out of sync with today's world of rising powers and new challenges; as interdependence among countries intensifies and the list of global problems that the U.S. can't resolve on its own grows, the benefits of international institutions will increase. Despite the fact that the Bush administration has squandered much goodwill in the past eight years, the U.S. has the means and the motive to spearhead the foundation of a new institutional order. It should follow a strategy that highlights the benefits of the institutional revisions, links the proposed order to the current one, and uses the United States' position of influence to persuade other governments to sign on to reform.

15. A SENSE OF UNREALITY

Fukuyama, Francis

American Interest, May-June 2009

The author writes that there is a "pervasive sense of unreality" in Washington about the scale of the economic crisis facing the U.S. and the rest of the world. The current administration's economic policy team seems to be operating, says Fukuyama, on the assumption that the problem facing the financial system is one of illiquidity and not of insolvency, and that their task is to prop up the banks until their toxic assets can be fairly valued. The problems run deeper than that, says Fukuyama, resulting from years of Americans consuming and spending more than they were saving or producing, and trillions of dollars from abroad fueling the rapid increase of debt. He points out that this is a non-partisan crisis – both Republicans and Democrats were complicit in the deregulation of the financial sector that enabled the explosion of the shadow banking economy. The crisis is primarily a failure of U.S. public policy, writes Fukuyama, and "now that the public sector is cleaning up behind them, we need to move from astonishment to a different model of capitalism if we are to fix our own economy and regain a shred of credibility on the world stage." Currently available online at <http://www.the-american-interest.com/article.cfm?piece=604>

16. SURVIVING THE SLUMP: A SPECIAL REPORT ON BUSINESS IN AMERICA

Guest, Robert

Economist, May 30, 2009

America's economic crisis began at the end of 2007 when Wall Street discovered that their tricks for disguising risks had vanished. Most executives are now seeing America's worst business climate ever and agreeing to pay cuts. In 1955 Time magazine's "man of the year" was Harlow

Curtice, the head of General Motors; today, GM is a byword for poor management. Americans who still have jobs worry about losing them. But, Guest writes, a more efficient bankruptcy process is making it easier for lenders to collect what they are owed and is allowing weak companies to die and the strongest to survive. He notes that some economists believe America will begin to recover later in 2009 or in early 2010; their rationale is that recession started earlier in America than elsewhere, the government's stimulus package is likely to work, and Americans have a natural competitive streak. While health care remains the most dysfunctional part of the U.S. economy, America is still the best place in the world to do business. Currently available online at http://web.economist.com/displaystory.cfm?story_id=13686504

Global Issues / Environment

17. BUILDING A GREENER CHINA

Wu, Ariane

Far Eastern Economic Review, May 2009

Wu, New Media Fellow at the Asia Society's Center on U.S.-China Relations, writes that, now that Barack Obama has accepted Chinese President Hu Jintao's invitation to visit China later this year, this is a huge opportunity for both countries to collaborate on reducing energy consumption and carbon emissions. While China has not committed to emission caps, "green" building and retrofitting inefficient construction would be a much more promising avenue to pursue. Wu notes that the Chinese regime is well aware of the cost-saving benefits of green buildings and is increasingly worried about looming energy shortages. However, there are a number of obstacles to adoption of green construction in China on a massive scale, notably government subsidies for electricity and gas, lack of national energy performance standards, breakneck-speed building schedules that do not allow for environmentally-sound analysis, and a lack of experienced environmental engineers. Wu says that China's high-profile eco-campaigns are good in that they promote awareness of the energy and environmental challenges the country faces, however the government must enact tough policies, such as establishing nationwide standards, before the green building industry can flourish. Currently available online at <http://www.feer.com/international-relations/20098/may56/Building-a-Greener-China>

18. COULD FOOD SHORTAGES BRING DOWN CIVILIZATION?

Brown, Lester

Scientific American, May 2009

The author, president of the Earth Policy Institute, writes that the biggest threat to global stability is the potential for food crises in poor countries to cause government collapse. Food scarcity and the resulting higher food prices are pushing poor countries into chaos. Such "failed states" can export disease, terrorism, illicit drugs, weapons and refugees. Water shortages, soil erosion and rising temperatures from global warming are placing severe limits on food production. Without massive and rapid intervention to address these three environmental factors, the author argues, a series of government collapses could threaten the world order. Currently available online at <http://www.scientificamerican.com/article.cfm?id=civilization-food-shortages&page=5>

19. JOURNALIST OF THE FUTURE

Kumar, Priya

American Journalism Review, April/May 2009

NBC's Mara Schiavocampo is being hailed as the first "digital correspondent." After spending a year as a freelance reporter "not bound by geography," the network was so impressed it created a

new position for her to showcase her cinema-verité style of storytelling. Schiavocampo comes up with story ideas, shoots video and still photography, edits, blogs and produces packages for the Web and television. She travels where she pleases and covers subjects ranging from how Detroit citizens are coping with the struggling auto industry to the popularity of cupcakes to how Hindu temples in India sell hair from devotees for Americans' hair extensions. Her stories, NBC Senior Vice President Alexandra Wallace, "convey an intimacy and honesty sometimes lost in traditional stories." Currently available online at <http://www.ajr.org/Article.asp?id=4735>

20. MAN-MADE NOISE MAY BE ALTERING EARTH'S ECOLOGY

Thompson, Clive

Wired, vol. 16, no. 6, June 2008

The author notes that noise from human activities, such as aircraft, highway traffic and construction is not just an aesthetic nuisance – it is becoming a serious environmental issue. In a wilderness environment, the distinctive sounds of the various species of animals use different frequencies in the acoustic spectrum, and their mating calls or warning cries can be heard without interfering with those of other species. The author notes that some researchers believe that this is how they can coexist so well. Noise from human activities can interfere with various acoustic frequencies, compromising species' ability to communicate and making them vulnerable to predation. This is possibly a factor in many species' decline worldwide. Available online at http://www.wired.com/science/planetearth/magazine/16-06/st_thompson

21. ROLL THE DICE: HOW ONE JOURNALIST GAMBLED ON THE FUTURE OF NEWS

Sennot, Charles M.

Columbia Journalism Review, March-April 2009

Sennot, a former Boston Globe correspondent, writes of his transition from being a traditional print journalist to co-founding GlobalPost.com, an online "collaborative" foreign news agency that has attracted major journalists who write on a freelance basis for a modest stipends and shares in the company. Despite the trepidation of entering a new realm, and a shortfall in funding, GlobalPost.com was launched and is among a group that includes ProPublica and Politico moving the news delivery model forward. It also offers an entrepreneurial landing spot for journalists exiting traditional print careers. "It is an exciting time, a historic shift in how the world will be informed," Sennot writes. He is currently GlobalPost.com's executive editor. Currently available online at http://www.cjr.org/cover_story/roll_the_dice.php?page=all

22. TOTAL RECALL

Marcus, Gary

Wired, vol. 17, no. 4, April 2009, pp. 110-115

Since 2006, a California woman, Jill Price, has received significant media attention as "the woman who doesn't forget." Her unusual autobiographical memory first came to the attention of neuroscientists who wrote about her capability for recall in a scientific journal. But Marcus, a cognitive psychologist himself, finds a rather different story about his subject after spending several days with her. Price remembers minute details about her own history, her community, and a few favorite topics such as television shows, airplane crashes, and news-making disasters. But when Marcus quizzed Price about events of the 2008 election cycle, she came up short. Responding to standard tests measuring short-term recall for new information, Price does no better than average, Marcus found. Price's unusual memory is not so much attributable to the capacity of her brain, but her obsessive-compulsive habits in journaling about the small details of

every day, and keeping mementoes of the past. The neuroscientists who first wrote about Price gave her condition a new name, hyperthymestic syndrome, Greek for exceptional memory. Available online at http://www.wired.com/medtech/health/magazine/17-04/ff_perfectmemory?currentPage=all

23. WHAT MAKES US HAPPY

Wolfshenk, Joshua

Atlantic Monthly, June 2009

For more than 70 years, Harvard University researchers have been collecting data on a group of its male students to gain some insights into the keys to “successful living.” The collected data of what is known as the Grant Study, passed from one generation of researchers to another, amounts to a rare kind of longitudinal study. Wolfshenk is the first journalist to comb through the accumulated files and draw some conclusions about whether the data does what it set out to do. The primary researcher on the study for more than forty years says the lives of the 268 subjects, half of whom are now deceased, “were too human for science, too beautiful for numbers, too sad for diagnosis and too immortal for bound journals.” On a more tangible level, researcher George Vaillant did identify a number of factors that seemed to mark a healthy transition from middle age to a healthy old age: education, stable marriage, not smoking, not abusing alcohol, some exercise, and healthy weight. Of those who had most of these factors in their favor at age 50, half arrived at the age of 80 as happy and well. Currently available online at <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200906/happiness>

Regional Security

24. AFRICA: THE UNITED STATES AND CHINA COURT THE CONTINENT

Shinn, David H.

Journal of International Affairs, vol. 62, no. 2, Spring/Summer 2009, pp. 37-53

The United States and China are the most important actors in Africa and share similar goals, writes Shinn, an adjunct professor at George Washington University and former Foreign Service officer. Both seek raw materials such as oil, political and economic support in world forums from African countries, and to increase exports as Africa’s economy grows. Despite these similarities, the U.S. and China have different strategies of dealing with Africa, and can learn from each other. The U.S. should approach African governments with more humility, have more personal contact with its leaders, and contribute more security personal to United Nations peacekeeping operations in Africa. China should speak more forcefully with African leaders about corruption, poor governance and human rights abuses, and expand its contact with Africa’s civil society, labor unions, non-government organizations and opposition political parties. China should also join the United States in training Africans to take part in peacekeeping operations, and be more open about its aid and investment in Africa. Finally, the United States and China should cooperate to benefit each other and African nations, in areas including peacekeeping operations, energy development, public health, environmental practices, and building Africa’s export capacity. Currently available online at <http://www.allbusiness.com/economy-economic-indicators/economic-conditions-decline/12324932-1.html>

25. BEYOND THE WATER’S EDGE: THE ROLE OF EX-PRESIDENTS IN U.S. FOREIGN POLICY

Douville, Alex J.

Georgetown Journal of International Affairs, vol. 10, no. 1, Winter/Spring 2009, pp. 57-62

Ex-presidents are increasingly asserting a more active role in foreign policy due to the relatively young age at which they retire, longer life expectancies, and the reach of the Internet and 24-hour communications networks. The author, director of policy studies at the Center for the Study of the Presidency in Washington, D.C. says that the ongoing engagement of these men is good and may contribute to the future success of foreign policy. The reach of former presidents is broader these days because many recent officials, including Jimmy Carter, have established policy centers in their names giving them a solid platform from which to exert influence. Sitting presidents are also making use of their predecessors to handle delicate diplomatic missions and to raise funds for humanitarian disasters. "Former presidents can also circumvent the animosity that plagues traditional channels of U.S. foreign policy," Douville writes, "championing American ideals by acting as unofficial 'Goodwill Ambassadors.'" While their influence is valuable, he says, their activities should be coordinated with current administrations whenever possible.

26. DIPLOMACY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Ottaway, Marina

Harvard International Review, vol. 30, no. 3, Fall 2008, pp. 68-71

Ottaway, Director of the Middle East Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, discusses the new independence being shown by the Gulf countries. She feels that, while this presents a challenge for Obama's administration, it can also be viewed as an opportunity for America to work with Gulf countries to tackle the major problems of this region. Since Saddam Hussein was removed from power in early 2003, the number of Arab governments that are antagonistic to the U.S. has dwindled to nearly none. However, regimes that have been friendly to the U.S. are not blindly following Washington's lead. While not hostile to America, the countries of the Gulf are pursuing policies that they believe protect their interests, regardless of what Washington wants. Currently available online at <http://hir.harvard.edu/index.php?page=article&id=1802>

27. FORGETTING PYONGYANG

Bandow, Doug

National Interest, Web Exclusive, May 27, 2009

The author, a senior fellow at the Cato Institute, asserts that North Korea's recent nuclear test "has little practical importance." Noting that North Korea has been a nuclear state for some time, Bandow suggests that the tests may be linked to internal politics, since Kim Jong-il is not well and his succession has hardly been assured. Our main objective should be to avoid, not trigger, a conflict with the North – to wait out its eventual demise. President Obama and Secretary Clinton overstated the danger from the North's tests, which "changed nothing and threatened no one." The U.S. should encourage China to use its influence to promote internal regime change. Barring that, the administration should express an interest in forging a more positive relationship with the North and should be open to both formal and informal bilateral discussions – but only if Pyongyang reciprocates. Further North Korean provocations should be met with "bored contempt rather than excited concern;" the U.S. should also step back and allow Beijing, Seoul, and Tokyo to take the lead in dealing with the North, since they are more directly threatened by Pyongyang. "North Korea is a nightmare, but a far worse one for other nations than America." Currently available online at <http://www.nationalinterest.org/Article.aspx?id=21524>

28. KIM III

Kang, David C.

National Interest, web exclusive, posted May 28, 2009

According to the author, director of the Korean Studies Institute at the University of Southern California, North Korea's recent nuclear and missile tests have been conducted as much for domestic reasons as to send messages to the United States. Kim Jong-Il's poor health has led to internal maneuvering over the succession, and there is no clear heir. This uncertainty has led to a lack of both long-term planning and strategic vision within the governing class and an incentive for nationalistic activities by the various factions. Kang believes that the Obama administration has responded properly by not overreacting, since bellicose rhetoric from the United States would only benefit hardliners in Pyongyang. Currently available online at <http://www.nationalinterest.org/Article.aspx?id=21528>

29. OBAMA'S EXISTENTIAL CHALLENGE TO AHMADINEJAD

Milani, Abbas

Washington Quarterly, vol. 32, no. 2, April 2009, pp. 63-78

Comparing the relationship between the U.S. and Iran to that of the Capulets and Montagues, the author points out that, for thirty years, Iran has partially defined itself in opposition to the U.S. The election of Barack Obama defies Tehran's stereotypical view of America. Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is vulnerable in the upcoming election, due to mismanagement of the Iranian economy and the reduced price of oil. There are also at least three fissures in Iran's politics: a power struggle between Ayatollahs Khamenei and Rafsanjani, a theological split regarding the role of the clergy in government, and the role of the Revolutionary Guards, which have become the wildcard of the country's domestic politics. The regime is feeling insecure because of its isolation from the majority of the population, who feel disenfranchised, economically deprived, and viewed internationally as a pariah nation. A coalition of forces is developing around three principal ideas – the status quo is untenable, democracy is the only viable answer, and the violent overthrow of the regime is neither possible nor desirable. Says Milani, "nothing is more dangerous for the regime than the idea of normalized relations with a U.S. government that acts as a responsible but powerful member of the international community, and not its master; war helps the mullahs and prudent U.S. policy hurts them." The Obama administration should, therefore, "reach out to Iran to promote nonproliferation and democratic processes." Online link to PDF full text at <http://www.twq.com/09april/index.cfm?id=337>

30. THE RETURN OF CARTERISM?

Herman, Arthur

Commentary, vol. 127, no. 1, January 2009, pp. 18-23

Herman explores foreign policy goals for the Obama administration. He also reflects upon the foreign policy legacy of President Jimmy Carter in terms of its focus upon human rights. President Obama has begun his administration with the same goal that former President Carter started with: that of restoring the image of America around the world. The author urges President Obama not to follow too closely in the footsteps of Carter, arguing that Carter's emphasis on human rights as the touchstone of American foreign policy left the U.S. in the most perilous position since the Korean War. Currently available online at <http://www.commentarymagazine.com/viewarticle.cfm/the-return-of-carterism--14051>

31. SMART POWER: GREAT LEADERS KNOW WHEN HARD POWER IS NOT ENOUGH

Coutu, Diane

Harvard Business Review, vol. 86, no. 11, November 2008, pp. 55-59

In this interview with Joseph Nye, former American government official as well as former dean of Harvard University's John F. Kennedy's School of Government, the author, senior editor at HBR, discusses challenges ahead for the U.S., including combining hard power, characterized by coercion, and "soft" power, which relies on attraction. The combination of hard and "soft" power results in smart power, a tool used to mobilize people around agendas that look beyond current problems. Although some men have used smart power, it is particularly difficult for women to lead with it, since there is often pressure for them to prove they are not "soft". Power is a tool, with clear communication serving as one of its most effective instruments.

U.S. Society and Values

32. BINDING THE NATION: NATIONAL SERVICE IN AMERICA

Grigsby, Carol Armistead

Parameters, vol. 38, no. 4, Winter 2008-09, pp. 109-123

The author feels that civilian national service could strengthen American identity and further contribute to this country by forging a new sense of community, rebuilding the connection between the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, and restoring sound civil-military relationships. A history of national service in the United States is also presented in this article. National service could be structured in a way to encourage a lifelong spirit of volunteerism for all Americans. This article is currently available on the Internet at:

<http://www.carlisle.army.mil/usawc/Parameters/08winter/grigsby.pdf>

33. CAN AMERICA FAIL?

Mahbubani, Kishore

Wilson Quarterly, vol. 33, no. 2, Spring 2009, pp. 48-54

The author, dean of the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore, believes that the massive crises that the U.S. is now experiencing are partly the product of three systemic failures. First, American society is afflicted with "groupthink," having accepted the proclamations of economic gurus such as Alan Greenspan and Robert Rubin that unregulated financial markets would naturally deliver economic growth and serve the public good. Second is the erosion of the notion of individual responsibility, as Americans cannot see how their individual actions have undermined, rather than strengthened, their society. Third is the inability of American society to see how the abuse of power has created many of the problems the U.S. now confronts abroad. The author sees the American people losing confidence in their ability to compete with Chinese and Indian workers. At the moment of their country's greatest economic vulnerability in many decades, few Americans dare to speak the truth and say that the U.S. cannot retreat from globalization; both the American people and the world would be worse off. However, as globalization and global capitalism create new forces of "creative destruction," America will have to restructure its economy and society in order to compete. Currently available online at http://www.wilsoncenter.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=wq.essay&essay_id=518042

34. INTERNATIONALLY, THE BUSINESS OF EDUCATION IS BOOMING

Fischer, Karin

Chronicle of Higher Education, Vol. 55, No. 38, May 29, 2009, pp. A1, A31-A32

Despite the global economic downturn, the business of education is booming. The number of students who study outside their home countries is projected to grow from three million this year to eight million by 2025, and most U.S. colleges and universities not only lack the capacity to deal with the rising numbers but probably cannot efficiently create the needed capacity. Instead,

they are turning to the rapidly-growing business sector that provides services to international educators – everything from medical evacuations for sick students to recruitment, internships and evaluation of foreign academic credentials. U.S. colleges also need help with the 1.25 million foreign-educated people who come to the U.S. each year and the many more they hope to recruit. Most of the U.S.-bound students used to be coming for study at the graduate level, but now colleges are seeking undergraduates, “who typically pay full tuition,” Fischer says. To find such students, colleges are paying companies for marketing plans, advertising materials, international recruitment tours and fairs, and similar services.

35. LITTLE BOXES: THE NEW MOVEMENT TO SERIOUSLY DOWNSIZE OUR HOMES

Bender, Kristin

E: The Environmental Magazine, Vol. 20, no. 3, May-June 2009, pp. 35-39

Bender describes how the environmental movement, rising energy prices, and the financial crisis of 2008 have affected Americans’ attitudes about housing. Now, about forty percent of new construction is “green” because it is less expensive for homeowners over the long term and creates less construction waste. As Baby Boomers are reaching retirement years and their children are no longer living with them, the family home is too large and too expensive to maintain. The article lists a number of construction projects and companies that are focused on building small, environmentally-friendly apartments, mobile homes, and detached houses. Currently available online at <http://www.emagazine.com/view/?4669>

36. MEETING FAMILY AND MILITARY NEEDS THROUGH MILITARY CHILD CARE

Zellman, Gail Et Al.

Armed Forces and Society, vol. 35, no. 3, April 2009, pp. 437-459

This article summarizes results from a child care survey of military families conducted by the RAND Corporation in 2004 and draws policy implications for the military child-care system. The article describes the military child-care system, discusses the policy objectives of the system, and summarizes survey results that clarify the degree to which the Department of Defense is meeting its child-care goals. The authors find evidence that despite its high quality, the military child-care system fails to optimize readiness and retention of military members because these goals do not drive system policies or operations. The article offers suggestions for improving.\

37. UNCLE SAM: SCIENTIST

Dubois, Lisa A.

Lens, Winter 2009, pp. 4-9

During the past century, America reached the pinnacle of science and technology, thanks in no small measure to its immigrant spirit, diversity and genius for innovation. The U.S. outstripped all other countries in the number of science-related Nobel prizes awarded, in bringing new biotechnical products to the market, and in the amount of money spent on basic research. However, at the beginning of the 21st century, America’s position of strength can no longer be taken for granted, hindered by the triple-whammy of reduced federal funding for basic research, a flagging biotech industry, and a public education system rife that is failing to turn on young people to careers in the sciences. The author believes that this can be changed if new federal investment in basic research can shore up a struggling economy. DuBois fears that, without investment in science and education, the United States will become a second-rate country. Currently available online at <http://www.mc.vanderbilt.edu/lens/article/?id=214>

