

ARTICLE ALERT

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INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

[1] Woman Of The World

Alter, Jonathan

Vanity Fair, June 2011

Currently available online at <http://www.vanityfair.com/politics/features/2011/06/hillary-clinton-201106>

Hillary Rodham Clinton, now in her ninth year as America's most admired woman, is "in her element" dealing with foreign upheaval not seen since the fall of the Soviet Union. President Obama chose her as Secretary of state because "she represents the United States better than anyone but him," this lengthy portrait claims. In the two and a half years on the job, she has visited 80 countries. She and President Obama agree that "one-size-fits-all" foreign policy will not work. Staffers note that both Obama and Hillary are methodical, deductive thinkers who drill down into a problem. But in an interview, she acknowledged that most problems are never solved. "You just keep working at them and working at them and working at them," Clinton said.

[2] Visegrad: A New European Military Force

Friedman, George

Stratfor, May 17, 2011

After the collapse of the former Soviet Union, four Central and Eastern European countries – Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Hungary – formed the Visegrad Group, or V4, named after a fourteenth-century alliance formed in Visegrad Castle in present-day Hungary. The goal of the V4 was to create a regional framework after the fall of communism. In May, the Visegrad Group announced the formation of a battlegroup that would be in place by 2016 and would not be part of the NATO command. Friedman, founder of the security consultancy Stratfor, writes since the fall of the USSR, the primary focus of the V4 nations had been membership in the EU and NATO. The formation of the V4 force is a major change in their strategic thinking, he notes. Russia has regained much of its former influence, underscoring the V4 countries' historical fear of Russia. Their enthusiasm about joining Western Europe has waned, in view of the economic crisis consuming the eurozone, questions about whether NATO can provide a genuine security umbrella, and Germany's commitment to the EU and NATO and a growing German-Russian economic relationship. Friedman notes that previously, the Visegrad countries would have been reluctant to undertake a unilateral defense policy, therefore the decision to do this is significant.

[3] Danger: Falling Tyrants
Atlantic Monthly, June 2011

Goldberg, Jeffrey

Currently available online at <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2011/06/danger-falling-tyrants/8493/>

Preserving U.S. access to oil may require the Obama administration to call for more democracy in some countries in the Middle East while propping up monarchs in others, according to Goldberg. The trajectories of the Middle East's revolutions are still difficult to discern, and it is not clear yet that tyranny, is, in fact, in permanent eclipse. Goldberg notes that some ruling regimes may need to be propped up to counterbalance the major threat facing the U.S. in the region, Iran. He believes that the U.S. should pay close attention to the Muslim brotherhood, which has a number of autonomous branches of varying degrees of radicalism. The Arab revolution has created some fracturing along ideological lines within the Muslim Brotherhood, but Goldberg notes that it is adept at playing politics and ducking hard questions.

[4] Demystifying The Arab Spring: Parsing The Differences Between Tunisia, Egypt and Libya

Foreign Affairs, May/June 2011, pp. 2-7

Anderson, Lisa.

Why have the upheavals in Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya followed such different paths? Because of the countries' vastly different cultures and histories, writes the president of the American University in Cairo. Washington must come to grips with these variations if it hopes to shape the outcomes constructively.

[5] Chinese Strategic Thinking On Multilateral Regional Security In Northeast Asia
Orbis, Spring 2011, Vol. 55 Issue 2, pp. 298-313

Rozman, Gilbert.

This article argues that multilateral mechanisms for addressing security issues in East Asia are weak and that a key reason is the hollowness of China's ostensible and much-touted commitment to multilateralism. This is especially troubling when the region faces major security challenges and regional relations (and China's approach to them) appear to be moving from "economics in command" to "security in command." The article concludes with a prediction that "A coordinated approach to combining alliances and quasi-alliances exclusive of China with multilateralism inclusive of it will best test China's intentions during this decade."

ENVIROMENT AND ENERGY

[6] Will Natural Gas Fuel America In The 21st Century?
Post Carbon Institute Report, May 29, 2011

Hughes, David

Available online (PDF, 93MB) at <http://www.postcarbon.org/report/331901-report-will-natural-gas-fuel-america>

The author, a Canadian energy expert and geoscientist formerly with the Geological Survey of Canada, notes that natural gas is being hailed as a promising “bridge fuel” between high-carbon fuel sources and renewable energy, largely on the basis of horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing technologies to tap into previously inaccessible deposits of shale gas. Hughes writes that shale gas wells are costly, both in financial and energy terms, and carry much greater environmental risks than conventional gas wells; because of this, the full-cycle greenhouse gas emissions of shale gas are almost as high as coal. The most promising areas for drilling are much smaller than originally anticipated. Hughes notes that shale gas wells experience very high depletion rates, often as much as 85% in the first year, forcing an accelerating treadmill of drilling just to keep production from falling. In the face of declining gas production in North America, Hughes warns that we have “placed all our eggs in the shale gas basket”, and that strategies for energy sustainability must focus on reducing energy demand and optimizing the use of combustible fuels.

[7] Water Challenges Asia’s Rising Powers – Part I

YaleGlobal, 12 July 2011

Keith Schneider

Currently available at: <http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/water-challenges-asia-powers-part-i>

Scarcity of water increasingly challenges economic growth of India and China. Water’s role in economic development is taken for granted, yet for running the growth engine it’s as precious a commodity as fossil fuels. This YaleGlobal series examines strategies for negotiating demands among competing industries. Conflicts over water could disrupt China’s steady economic progress, argues journalist Keith Schneider in the first of two articles. The nation of 1.33 billion, the largest emerging global market and set to become the world’s lead manufacturing nation, is a price-setter. The Chinese government anticipated contests over water and already enforces many efficiency and conservation measures. But food and energy production depend on water while China is getting drier: Water reserves are down 13 percent from 2000. Amid rising energy demands, coal-fired power already accounts for nearly a quarter of the nation’s freshwater use. China’s ongoing rapid development could lead to water shortages sure to rattle food, energy and water prices worldwide.

[8] Water Challenges Asia’s Rising Powers – Part II

YaleGlobal, 14 July 2011

Rohini Nilekani

Currently available at: <http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/water-challenges-asia-powers-part-ii>

India and China account for one third of the world’s population; each consumes more freshwater than other nations. Per inhabitant per year, though, India uses less than half what’s used in the US, China uses less than one third. This YaleGlobal series examines India and China’s water use, their expectations for rising demand and recognition that shortages will disrupt economic progress. The Planning Commission of India repeatedly warns that water will become a more serious issue than land or energy for India in years to come, points out Rohini Nilekani, in the second article of the series. India’s transition from an economy based on agriculture to a mixed one, with water use controlled by states rather than the federal constitution, already leads to conflicts. She urges planning for a low-water economy: Good governance and regulatory frameworks can prevent pollution and waste, while encouraging efficiency, reliable and fair allocation, and wise consumer choices.

ECONOMICS AND TRADE ISSUES**[9] Meet The New Optimists****Newsweek online, May 15, 2011****Cose, Ellis**Available online at <http://www.newsweek.com/2011/05/15/meet-the-new-optimists.html>

The economic crisis may be depressing for most Americans, but African-Americans remain amazingly upbeat, according to polls. Blacks were more likely than whites to say the economy was sound, according to CBS News. A Washington Post-Kaiser-Harvard poll conducted earlier this year found that 60 percent of blacks, compared to 36 percent of whites, believe that the standard of living will be better for their children. Obama's presidency has fueled optimism among many blacks, but even before Obama's election, the new generation of black achievers refused to believe they would be stymied by the bigotry that bedeviled their parents.

[10] A Surprising Jobs Recovery: American Manufacturing Is Back**Time Magazine online, May 16, 2011****Gandel, Stephen**Currently available online at <http://curiouscapitalist.blogs.time.com/2011/05/16/a-surprising-jobs-recovery-american-manufacturing-is-back/>

Despite a lackluster economic rebound, manufacturing in the United States has, for the first time in decades, seen an increase. Nearly one in every six jobs that has been created since the beginning of 2010 has been in manufacturing – and additional 240,000 workers in total. The recovery of U.S. manufacturing is due in part to the weak dollar and increased foreign demand for U.S. construction and agricultural machinery and building supplies. As a result, in the first quarter of 2011, U.S. manufacturing output grew by 9 percent, or five times as fast as the overall economy. Even so, manufacturing – with its comparatively well-paying jobs – makes up only 9 percent of the workforce, down from 16 percent at the beginning of the 1990s.

[11] Quality Of Life: India Vs. China**New York Review of Books, May 12, 2011****Sen, Amartya**

Nobel laureate and economist Amartya Sen compares the two Asian economic giants India and China, emphasizing that GNP is not the only measure of successful government. Currently, China outperforms India in quality of life factors such as life expectancy, literacy, health care and nutrition of its citizens. He writes, "Sustainable economic growth is a very good thing in a way that 'growth mania' is not." He acknowledges that growth generates public resources, but the governments must use the income responsibly for the public good. Because of the size of India's prosperous minority and media focus on it, an unrealistically "rosy picture" of Indian society is projected. He urges a realistic public policy that prioritizes ways to improve the lives of the majority of Indians who live in poverty, and warns of the damaging consequences of focus only on GNP growth.

POLITICS AND SOCIAL PROCESSES

[12] Owned By The Army: Has The President Lost Control Of His Generals?
Harper's, vol. 322, no. 1932, May 2011, pp. 34-40
Stevenson, Jonathan

The author, professor of strategic studies at the U.S. Naval War College, writes that the American founders designated civilian control over the military as a safeguard against a would-be Caesar; with a few exceptions, challenges by military commanders has not been a major issue. That started to change after the Vietnam war, as many soldiers who served in Vietnam, who would go on to lead the armed forces in later decades, believed that their superiors should have more forcefully dissented from the civilian leadership. Stevenson notes that the system began to break down during the George W. Bush presidency, when the global military presence required to conduct the war on terror has emboldened military commanders and made generals “effectively proconsuls of the U.S. government”. He notes that recent presidents have less military experience, while at the same time, the generals are pushing for more resources, as has happened in Afghanistan. Stevenson says the remedy is “a chief executive who appreciates the risk of strategic overstretch and is willing to rein in military leaders.”

[13] Considering a Balanced Budget Amendment: Lessons from History
The Heritage Foundation, published on July 14, 2011
Ernest Istook

Currently available at: <http://www.heritage.org/Research/Reports/2011/07/Considering-a-Balanced-Budget-Amendment-Lessons-from-History>

Attempts at passing a balanced budget amendment (BBA) date back to the 1930s, and all have been unsuccessful. Both parties carry some of the blame: The GOP too often has been neglectful of the issue, and the Democratic Left, recognizing a threat to big government, has stalled and obfuscated, attempting to water down any proposals to mandate balanced budgets. On the occasion of the July 2011 vote on a new proposed BBA, former Representative from Oklahoma Ernest Istook presents lessons from history.

EDUCATION AND INFORMATION

[14] My Monster, My Self: On Nicholas Carr And William Powers
The Nation, March 16, 2011
Greenberg, Gary

Currently available online at <http://www.thenation.com/article/159279/my-monster-my-self-nicholas-carr-and-william-powers>

The author, a therapist, notes that cell phones and the Internet have made the young fundamentally different than older adults and are redefining the meaning of a good life and what it means to be human. Nicholas Carr, in *THE SHALLOWS* and William Powers, in *HAMLET'S BLACKBERRY*, attempt to tell us who we are becoming now that we swim in an endless stream of digital data. Their books are in part confessional accounts of their discovery of their dependence on their cell phones

and how the online life has changed them. Once upon a time, enlightenment philosophers and scientists encouraged us to think of ourselves as the source of meaning and reading was central to this. But now reading has been supplanted, as Carr puts it, by “the speedy, superficial skimming of information” culled from the links generated by a Google search, which discourages “any deep, prolonged engagement with a single argument, idea, or narrative.” The space for contemplation disappears in the digital frenzy, and with it the necessity, and the possibility, of reflection. Constantly in the digital crowd, we are deprived of depth and substance, even when we don’t know it. With every Google search or friend request or tweet or stolen look at your BlackBerry, you are that much more firmly plugged into the collective and that much less in touch with yourself. Some scientists have found that daily use of digital devices “stimulates brain cell alteration.” Overtaxation by the flood of information makes us more susceptible to distraction and less able to experience emotion. If we want to preserve the health of our brains, the author believes, we will carve out a “peaceful spot where contemplativeness can work its restorative magic.”

**[15] The Deciders: Facebook, Google, And The Future Of Privacy And Free Speech
The Future of the Constitution Series # 12, The Brookings Institution, May 2, 2011, 14 pgs
Rosen, Jeffrey.**

Currently available at http://www.brookings.edu/papers/2011/0502_free_speech_rosen.aspx

The author, a nonresident senior fellow in Governance Studies at the Brookings Institution, examines four different areas where existing ideas about constitutional protections for free speech and privacy will be most challenged in the era of Facebook and Google: ubiquitous surveillance with GPS devices and online surveillance cameras; airport body scanners; embarrassing Facebook photos and the problem of digital forgetting; and controversial YouTube videos.

U.S. SOCIETY AND VALUES

**[16] Air Conditioning, Cable TV, and an Xbox: What is Poverty in the United States Today?
The Heritage Foundation, published on July 18, 2011
Robert Rector, Rachel Sheffield**

Currently available at: <http://www.heritage.org/Research/Reports/2011/07/What-is-Poverty>

For decades, the U.S. Census Bureau has reported that over 30 million Americans were living in “poverty,” but the bureau’s definition of poverty differs widely from that held by most Americans. In fact, other government surveys show that most of the persons whom the government defines as “in poverty” are not poor in any ordinary sense of the term. The overwhelming majority of the poor have air conditioning, cable TV, and a host of other modern amenities. They are well housed, have an adequate and reasonably steady supply of food, and have met their other basic needs, including medical care. Some poor Americans do experience significant hardships, including temporary food shortages or inadequate housing, but these individuals are a minority within the overall poverty population. Poverty remains an issue of serious social concern, but accurate information about that problem is essential in crafting wise public policy. Exaggeration and misinformation about poverty obscure the nature, extent, and causes of real material deprivation, thereby hampering the development of well-targeted, effective programs to reduce the problem.

ARTS AND LITERATURE

[17] Jazz As A Black American Art Form: Definitions Of The Jazz Preservation Act
Journal of American Studies. February 2011, Volume 45, Issue 1
Farley, Jeff .

Jazz music and culture have experienced a surge in popularity after the passage of the Jazz Preservation Act (JPA) in 1987. This resolution defined jazz as a black American art form, thus using race, national identity, and cultural value as key aspects in making jazz one of the nation's most subsidized arts. Led by new cultural institutions and educational programs, millions of Americans have engaged with the history and canon of jazz that represent the values endorsed by the JPA. Record companies, book publishers, archivists, academia, and private foundations have also contributed to the effort to preserve jazz music and history. Such preservation has not always been a simple process, especially in identifying jazz with black culture and with America as a whole. This has required a careful balancing of social and musical aspects of jazz. For instance, many consider two of the most important aspects of jazz to be the blues aesthetic, which inevitably expresses racist oppression in America, and the democratic ethic, wherein each musician's individual expression equally contributes to the whole. Balanced explanations of race and nationality are useful not only for musicologists, but also for musicians and teachers wishing to use jazz as an example of both national achievement and confrontation with racism. Another important aspect of the JPA is the definition of jazz as a "high" art. While there remains a vocal contingent of critics arguing against the JPA's definitions of jazz, such results will not likely see many calling for an end to its programs, but rather a more open interpretation of what it means to be America's music.