ARTICLE ALERT: NOVEMBER 2014

The Information Resource Center (IRC) is pleased to offer you Article ALERT, the monthly current awareness publication of the U.S. Embassy Bangkok’s IRC. It offers abstracts of approximately 25 current articles and policy briefs from leading American journals and think tanks in six thematic areas with an emphasis on East Asian regional affairs. The views expressed in the articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect U.S. government policies.

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SPOTLIGHT: U.S. POLICY TOWARD ASIA

1. “Challenges to the U.S. Rebalance to Asia”
   What is the geostrategic dynamic that led the Obama administration to believe that the existing policy was inadequate and needed to be modified? What lessons might we learn from it to guide U.S. policy in the future? The author, a resident scholar and co-director of the Marilyn Ware Center for Security Studies at the American Enterprise Institute, discusses the challenges the United States faces in rebalancing to Asia.

2. “Revitalizing the Rebalance: How to Keep U.S. Focus on Asia”
   Michael J. Green and Zack Cooper. The Washington Quarterly, Fall 2014, 22 pages.
   The authors discuss the U.S.’s strategy under the U.S. President Barack Obama of focusing on Asia to address the balance of power in the region, and the role that the growing international power of China plays in the U.S. decision to focus its strategy on Asia.

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The author discusses the validity of the widespread assumptions that Asia is on the path to unending growth and success, and that the 21st century will be Asia’s century.

**WORLD AFFAIRS**

Is U.S. President Barack Obama a foreign-policy realist? Did the Obama administration actually ever pursue a realist foreign policy? What would a realist foreign-policy strategy look like? The author, an executive director of the Center for the *National Interest*, discusses whether President Obama is a true realist, or it’s an attempt from the administration to allow him to be seen as one.

5. "As the World Turns"
The author discusses the challenges of weak states and of New Emerging Powers (NEPs) to Western nations, then examines the roles of nationalism and anti-Americanism in the NEPs.

The authors explore the existential threats that nuclear weapons possessors pose with a new, empirically based metric called the Nuclear Annihilation Threat (NAT) Index, and analyze the existential threats and vulnerabilities that nuclear-armed states face from one another.

**ECONOMIC GROWTH**

7. “ASEAN Economic Performance, Institutional Effectiveness, and Foreign Direct Investment”
The author examines the impact of macroeconomic performance and institutional factors including government effectiveness, regulatory quality, rule of law, and property rights protection on foreign direct investment (FDI) flows into developing nations.

Does domestic political unrest deter foreign direct investment (FDI)? And what are the longer term impacts of unrest upon the market? The authors discuss why nonviolent forms of unrest are shown to more frequently achieve their goals and increase the prospects for democratic change and market stability.

9. “Whatever It Takes' Breaks Down”
Are we at a crossroads on the question of boosting sustainable growth? Has 2014 indeed proven to be a
disappointing year for the global economy? The author examines the stagnation of global economic
growth.

10. “Sugar Daddies of Global Finance”
The author discusses the relationship between governments and the banking industry, particularly
government bailouts of banks and government insurance of deposits and mortgages.

The author, the Gailliot and Scaife University Professor of Political Economy at Carnegie Mellon
University, explores the history of Central Banking in the United States, focusing on the founding
and history of the U.S. Federal Reserve Board (Fed), the Fed’s monetary policy decisions, its role as lender of
last resort, and the econometric models it uses.

**U.S. POLITICS**

12. “Why Democrats Need to Take Sides”
Young people and minorities are swelling the party’s ranks and pushing it to the left. The South is
increasingly in play. But can Democrats do what it takes to make Americans economically secure, even if
it means breaking off with Wall Street? The author discusses why straddling class divisions do not work
like it used to.

13. “Crashing the Party”
The author examines conservatism and the U.S. Republican Party, focusing on the possible effects of the
party’s aging demographic of voters, including Baby Boomers and the preceding generation.

**DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE**

The authors discuss how to best measure governance or state quality, focusing on Francis Fukuyama’s
approach of using a public administration lens to disaggregate the public sector into two domains:
upstream bodies at the center of government, and downstream delivery bodies that deliver,
commission, or fund services under the policy direction of government.

The authors discuss microdemocratic states -- meaning the dozen or so tiny countries with fewer than a
hundred-thousand citizens each, and argue that small states are not likely to be liberal democracies.

Discussing democracy promotion, the author examines a new effort to measure democracy called the
Varieties of Democracy Project (V-Dem), focusing on how to mark its progress and affect its future
course.
JOURNALISM AND SOCIAL MEDIA

17. “Just Communicating”
While the Internet has improved journalists' ability to transmit information, it has also reduced the resources available for their operations. Then author discusses the effects of developments in communication technology on journalism based on his experiences as a foreign correspondent during the late 20th century.

18. “Can Newsrooms Boost Traffic Without Spoiling Their Brand?”
How can the expanding number of contributors lead to conflicts of interest and plagiarism? The author discusses the credibility and integrity of news media as an increasing number of news outlets and journalism institutions are publishing content from contributors with minimal editing and compensation to the authors in order to increase revenue, production, and readership.

19. "Photography as Activism"
The author explores the role of visual media and photography in humanitarian crises, focusing on the significance of visual journalism and documentary photography in raising social consciousness.

EDUCATION

20. “Digital Reading Poses Learning Challenges for Students”
The author, a writer for *Education Week*, discusses the challenges with reading comprehension issues that students are facing when working with digital devices, and explores how reading strategies traditionally used for print materials have been adapted for digital learning environments.

The author, President of Wesleyan University, discusses the benefits of a well-rounded education, voicing his disagreement with the current re-fashion vocational education which adapt workers to the existing industrial regime and train a small part of a student for a specific task.

22. “MOOC U: The Revolution Isn't Over”
Are MOOC dead? The author discusses the development of massive open online courses (MOOCs), focusing on the position of MOOCs in the academic ecosystem after a series of high-profile failed experiments using MOOCs, and the use of MOOCs as a supplement to formal classroom learning.

GLOBAL ISSUES, ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT

23. “How We Ran Out of Air Time”
The author examines the relationship of humans with the atmosphere, focusing on how human-generated greenhouse gases and other pollutants have altered the composition and dynamics of the
atmosphere, and the lag between slow-building environmental phenomena and humanity’s awareness of them.

The author discusses the impact of warming oceans on the food chains of seabirds, and how global warming is lowering the basic amount of food produced by oceans and changing the proportions of sea life.

GLOBAL HEALTH

25. "Can Humanism Survive the Coming Transhumanist Revolution?"
The author examines how humanism, based on concepts of democracy, individual autonomy, and equality, could be impacted by the growth of artificial intelligence (AI) and other innovations in intelligent technology.

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