

## **ARTICLE ROUND-UP**

November/December 2007

*Article Round-up is the monthly current awareness publication of the Information Resource Center, U.S. Consulate General Public Affairs, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. 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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### **ECONOMIC SECURITY AND TRADE**

#### **1. "Global Rebalancing"**

John H. Makin. Economic Outlook #22249, October 2007, 4 pages.

The global economic and financial picture is changing rapidly. The U.S. economy has slowed; the Federal Reserve has cut rates; the Bank of England's policies have pushed one of its largest mortgage lenders to near collapse; Japan has slipped into negative growth, and China's growth has accelerated in the face of rising inflation. The author reviews these developments and makes predictions.

#### **2. "The Global Savings Puzzle"**

Mohamed A. El-Erian and Michael Spence. Hoover Digest, No. 4, 2007, 4 pages.

For the past few years, the United States has generated insufficient domestic savings to cover its investment needs. The difference has been covered by large capital inflows from abroad. Why does the world's richest country appear to be saving at such a low rate that it has to borrow from poorer, developing countries to maintain its consumption and investment? The authors analyze the puzzle of the global savings configuration.

#### **3. "Who's to Blame for the Brave New Economy?"**

Robert Kuttner and Robert B. Reich. The American Prospect, November 2007, 5 pages.

Who are the culprits in the erosion of economic stability that has affected American life, average citizens, and even the corporate and financial elites? The authors, each of whom has authored a new book on the political economy, argue the question and discuss how to fix what ails the U.S. economy.

#### **4. "Privatization: A Summary Assessment"**

John Nellis. SAIS Review of International Affairs, Summer-Fall 2007, 25 pages.

Despite the fact that a large number of studies praise privatization's positive impact at the corporate level, as well as its positive macroeconomic and welfare contributions, public opinion in the developing world is still unfriendly to privatization. The percentage of respondents with a negative view of privatization rose from 55% in

2001 to 80% in 2003, then fell back to about 70% in the latest 2005 poll. The author examines the political economy of privatization and explains why privatization is unpopular.

**5. "Global Imbalances: A Source of Strength or Weakness?"**

Kristin J. Forbes. Cato Journal, Spring/Summer 2007, 10 pages.

Why are countries with low levels of investment willing to send relatively scarce resources to capital-abundant economies like the United States instead of investing in their own countries' economies, despite earning lower returns than the United States earns on its foreign investments? Understanding the motivation behind the millions of individual decisions that drive these capital inflows is critically important to understanding if this massive net transfer of capital into the United States reflects a strength or weakness of the global economy.

**GLOBAL ISSUES AND ENVIRONMENT**

**6. "World Energy Prospects and Challenges"**

Fatih Birol. Asia Pacific Review, May 2007, 12 pages.

The world is facing dual energy-related threats – first, that of not having adequate and secure supplies of energy at affordable prices and, second, that of the environmental harm caused by energy use. The author examines the essential role affordable energy plays in economic growth and human development, in addition to the vulnerability of the global energy system to supply disruptions.

**7. "An Economic Strategy to Address Climate Change and Promote Energy Security"**

Jason Furman, et al. Hamilton Project Strategy Paper, October 2007, 40 pages.

The issues of climate change and energy security are generally accepted as major challenges. The question now is not whether to do something about these challenges, but rather what to do about them. This paper draws on economic research to categorize the consensus on climate change and energy security into a three-part strategy.

**8. "Oil"**

Vijay V. Vaitheeswaran. Foreign Policy, November/December 2007, 5 pages.

This article discusses the petroleum industry, international energy policies, and alternative energy sources. The author opines that even though oil is poisoning the environment and fueling international conflicts, it will be the false threat of scarcity or the rise of an Asian energy axis that convinces the world to finally kick the oil habit.

**9. "Combating the Twin Epidemics of HIV/AIDS and Addiction"**

David A. Fiellin, et al. A Report of the CSIS Task Force on HIV/AIDS Center for Strategic and International Studies. October 2007, 21 pages.

This paper outlines why drug maintenance therapy is an effective HIV prevention intervention. The authors offer a snapshot of treatment availability in 12 developing countries and conclude with a recommendation to more fully integrate drug treatment services and HIV-prevention efforts in the next phase of the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR).

**REGIONAL SECURITY**

**10. "ASEAN and Its Security Offspring: Facing New Challenges"**

Sheldon W. Simon. Strategic Studies Institute, August 2007, 45 pages.

The author argues that ASEAN is pursuing an engagement strategy in the 21st century, bringing Southeast Asia's great political and economic powers into discussions. For the United States, ASEAN-dominated organizations have taken second place to Washington's bilateral ties to Southeast Asia. This article offers keys to understanding the important role that Southeast Asia-centered organizations are playing in Asian security.

**11. "U.S. Policy in Southeast Asia: Limited Re-engagement after Years of Benign Neglect"**

Diane K. Mauzy and Brian L. Job. Asian Survey, July/August 2007, 20 pages.

The article views American foreign policy in Southeast Asia from 1975 to the present as exhibiting varying degrees of benign neglect, with episodic attention to perceived security threats. With the George W. Bush presidency moving into its final years, what direction will U.S.-Southeast Asian relations take?

**12. "Winning Asia"**

Victor D. Cha. Foreign Affairs, November/December 2007, 16 pages.

According to critics, the Bush administration has been distracted by Iraq, failing to deal adequately with China's economic and political rise and alienating many Asians with its singular focus on counter-terrorism. Detractors charge that the lack of U.S. leadership after the Cold War has made Asia ripe for conflict. The author argues that this conventional wisdom is wrong.

**13. "Assessing American Asia Policy"**

Lowell Dittmer. Asian Survey, July/August 2007, 15 pages.

The author argues that U.S. policy in Asia has been overshadowed by the advent of terrorist acts perpetrated by terrorist elements in the Middle East. Asia, he opines, should still be one of the top priorities in U.S. foreign policy despite the Middle East threat. What is more important is how the United States fares in the ongoing contest for Asian leadership.

**14. "A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower"**

U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Department of the Navy, and U.S. Coast Guard. October 2007, 20 pages.

The Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard have come together to create a unified maritime strategy that integrates U.S. seapower with the seapower of its allies. This report describes how this coordinated effort will be employed around the world to protect the way of life and to prevent war.

**SOCIAL ISSUES**

**15. "Reform of Global Governance: Priorities for Action"**

Colin I. Bradford Jr. and Johannes F. Linn. The Brookings Institution Policy Brief #163, October 2007, 7 pages.

The authors argue that global institutions are not working well individually nor as a group. To help avoid crises and create a better future, the creation of a global governance system that reflects the new economic and demographic realities and

responds effectively to new global challenges of the 21st century is urgently needed. The authors outline the goals and prospects of global governance reform.

**16. "Democracy Without America"**

Michael Mandelbaum. *Foreign Affairs*, September-October 2007, 12 pages.

The ineffectiveness of the United States to establish democracy in nations such as Iraq, Afghanistan, and China is examined in comparison to the rise of democracy as the most popular political system since the early 1900s. To answer why and how democracy has enjoyed such extraordinary worldwide success despite the failure of U.S. efforts, the author discusses the concepts behind democracy and the influence of free markets on its establishment.

**17. "The Link between Economic Freedom and Human Rights"**

Anthony B. Kim. The Heritage Foundation WebMemo #1650, September 28, 2007, 3 pages.

The author examines economic freedom as a foundation of open societies and human rights. He explains how economic freedom can empower people and pave a path to political liberty.

**18. "Democracy and Security: Process versus Outcome in Assistance Policy?"**

Vincent Boudreau. *Democratization*, April 2007, 14 pages.

Democracy assistance has been a more or less serious element of U.S. foreign policy for the past 30 years, but has acquired new standing, at least rhetorically, over the last decade. The author examines shifting conditions against which U.S. policy has developed and the ways in which those shifts have influenced policy design in recent decades.

**MEDIA, COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

**19. "How the Media Shape Elections"**

Dotty Lyncy. *America*, October 22, 2007, 4 pages.

In the early part of 2007, the media spent a lot of time asking, "Can a woman, an African American or a Mormon be elected president?" The typical answer was a definite "maybe." However, the question in and of itself increased recognition of the female, African American, and Mormon candidates. This article examines how media coverage affects the elections in the United States.

**20. "Goodbye to All That"**

Steve Wasserman. *Columbia Journalism Review*, September/October 2007, 11 pages.

The article reports on the decline of book reviewing in U.S. newspapers. The author discusses the cultural premises behind and problems facing book coverage, including the financial challenges for the newspaper industry and the cultural shift away from in-depth reading and toward fast-paced consumption of images and sound bites.

**21. "Developing Media in Stabilization and Reconstruction Operations"**

Yll Bajraktari and Emily Hsu. *Stabilization and Reconstruction Series No. 7*, October 2007, 20 pages.

The authors believe that an independent, pluralistic, and sustainable media is vital to long-term peace and stability. An effective media can elevate moderate voices and dampen those which are extremist, while an ineffective media can reinforce divisions

between warring parties. This report offers recommendations for developing a strong media strategy in reconstruction operations.

## **22. "Found in (My) Space"**

Jason Spencer. *American Journalism Review*, October/November 2007, 4 pages.  
This article examines the role of social networking web sites such as MySpace and Facebook in contemporary journalism. As the popularity of these sites grows, so does their potential as virtual background tools. The author suggests some tips for journalists when using social networking sites in their reporting.

## **23. "A Woman's World"**

Sara Sklaroff. *The Wilson Quarterly*, Summer 2007, 4 pages.  
This article forecasts what American life will look like in an increasingly female society. College campuses, medical schools, and most traditionally male dominated professions all reflect gender shifts, and this article looks to history for possible precedents of matriarchy.

## **U.S. SOCIETY AND CULTURE**

## **24. "All in the Family"**

Richard Sousa. *Hoover Digest*, No. 4, 2007, 2 pages.  
When we look at education reform initiatives and schooling options, we often overlook homeschooling. The number of students who are homeschooled is a matter of some dispute, but their numbers appear to be increasing and some consider the performance of homeschooled children superior to that of students enrolled in traditional schools. Why does homeschooling work?

## **25. "What Do Parents Value in Education?: An Empirical Investigation of Parents' Revealed Preferences for Teachers"**

Brian A. Jacob and Lars Lefgren. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, November 2007, 35 pages.  
Government policy often assumes that academic achievement is the primary objective of education. But is this what society values most highly? This paper examines parents' preferences, on the basis of parent requests for individual elementary school teachers and information on teacher attributes, including principal reports of teacher characteristics that are typically unobservable.

## **26. "'Best Colleges,' Poor Report"**

Jim McDermott. *America*, September 24, 2007, 1 page.  
The article discusses the credibility issue of the school ranking system employed by U.S. News & World Report in its annual "America's Best Colleges" survey. The author argues that the survey has serious flaws both in its method and philosophy.

## **27. "Clickers in the Classroom: An Active Learning Approach"**

Margie Martyn. *Educause Quarterly*, Number 2, 2007, 4 pages.  
Clickers, or student response systems, are a technology used to promote active learning. Most research has shown that students who use clickers in the classroom become more engaged and enjoy using them. Although learning outcomes are higher when using clickers, the question is whether the clickers or the active learning pedagogies are the cause. The author conducts a study that compares learning

outcomes resulting from the use of clickers versus another active learning method -- class discussion.