

ARTICLE ROUND UP NOV-DEC 2006

ECONOMICS AND TRADE

1. FAST TRACK FOREVER?

Greg Mastel and Halandra Shapiro

International Economy, Summer 2006, 6 pages

There has been a nearly five-fold increase in Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) since fast-track negotiating authority was reestablished in 2002 by the Trade Promotion Authority Act. Fast-track authority is due to expire in 2007, and historically there have been long breaks before being reinstated, the authors state. Although it is possible to negotiate FTAs without fast-track authority, say the authors, it is much more difficult and prone to delays -- which discourages trade and is detrimental to both U.S. trade policy and global growth. The authors recommend that some form of permanent fast-track authority be established.

2. THE GLOBAL IMPLICATIONS OF A DOLLAR COLLAPSE

Samuel Brittan

International Economy, Summer 2006, 4 pages

The most likely trigger for a dollar collapse, Brittan contends, would be failure of the U.S. housing market, but such a drastic fall in the dollar's external value could well be the signal for Asian authorities to cease stockpiling assets and even start dumping them. He discusses the political and economic implications of a dollar collapse and describes possible scenarios.

3. VIETNAM: COUNTRY OUTLOOK

ViewsWire, 1 December 2006, 3 pages

The article provides brief and updated information on Vietnam's development including economic growth, international relations, domestic politics and policy trends.

4. VIETNAM'S TOP TEN ECONOMIC EVENTS OF 2006

Thai News Service, 3 January 2007, 3 pages

From joining the WTO to watching the stock market double in value, Vietnam had a banner year in 2006 in terms of both impressive economic performance and advances in the process of international integration

5. EIGHT SUPER TRENDS SHAPING THE FUTURE OF BUSINESS

Karl Albrecht

The Futurist, September-October 2006, 5 pages

Success in the business world of tomorrow means recognizing the sweeping changes of today. Here are the eight more profound ones.

6. CHINA BANKING AND FINANCE

Thomas Clouse

Institutional Investor, Sponsored Report, November 2006, 3 pages

Clouse, a Beijing-based journalist, says the excitement surrounding recent Initial Public Offerings (IPOs) in China's banking industry is based on banks' future prospects, rather than their past troubles. When China made its WTO commitments in 2001, he reports, its fragile banks were riddled with bad loans, cronyism, and corruption. China's banks have made a lot of progress since then, but a strong economy means reforms have yet to be truly tested. Poor loan decisions are generally masked by overall loan growth, he explains, but an anticipated global economic slump in 2007 will show how good reform has been. Clouse notes areas of concern such as the government's continued heavy involvement in the banking industry and caps on private and foreign ownership, which limit competition. Conversely, he adds, even limited participation of foreign banks will bring technology transfer and "best practices" into the Chinese market. Prospects are bright for the banks that manage to capitalize on reforms and new technologies, he states, but investors will need to choose wisely.

7. PRINCIPLED RESPONSIBILITY: TRANSFORMING THE CULTURE OF CORRUPTION

Condoleezza Rice, Secretary of State

Electronic Journal of the U.S. Department of State, December 2006, 1 page

The United States is proud to support those who advance the fight against corruption by promoting honest governance and integrity, restoring the public's trust, anchoring market integrity, and nurturing a free media and open society.

8. ADDRESSING CORRUPTION THROUGH INTERNATIONAL TREATIES AND COMMITMENTS

John Brandolino and David Luna, Anticorruption and Governance Initiatives, Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, U.S. Department of State

Electronic Journal of the U.S. Department of State, December 2006, 5 pages

By agreeing on mechanisms to fight corruption, the international community is opening the doors for increased multilateral and bilateral cooperation on important but traditionally local fronts.

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

9. DIALOGUE WITH ADVERSARIES

Christopher Bradish; Arlen Specter

Washington Quarterly, Winter 2006-2007, 17 pages

This article encourages bilateral and multilateral talks between the United States and adversaries, specifically Iran and North Korea. Sen. Specter argues that the U.S. must engage with Iran and North Korea regardless of feelings about the countries' policies and leadership. The senator gives examples of successful diplomatic efforts with Cuba and Syria, two other nations viewed as adversaries. He also describes a recent trip to Venezuela where he met with Hugo Chavez and convinced the president to meet with the U.S. ambassador, something Chavez had initially been unwilling to do. Specter concludes that in his experience, engaging political leaders, regardless of America's position on their leadership, will lead to more successful diplomacy and may even prevent armed conflict.

10. HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTION AND THE WAR IN IRAQ: NORMS, DISCOURSE, AND STATE PRACTICE

Eric A. Heinze

Parameters, Spring 2006, 11 pages

Dr. Heinze, Political Science Professor at the University of Oklahoma, analyzes the doctrine of humanitarian intervention as justification for the exercise of military power, specifically in the war in Iraq. With the failure to find weapons of mass destruction, the resort to force in Iraq has been justified on human rights grounds. The six factors that Heinze uses to determine if a war is a legitimate humanitarian intervention, include, motive, level of human suffering, war as a last resort, prospects for success, proportionality and right authority.

11. NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION OVER THE NEXT DECADE: CAUSES, WARNING SIGNS AND POLICY RESPONSES

Peter R. Lavoy

Nonproliferation Review, November 2006

In July 2006 the author organized a conference at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey that attracted some 60 scholars, non-governmental experts, military officers and U.S. government officials who were asked to look out over the horizon for the next 10 to 15 years to consider what factors might influence nuclear weapons proliferation in 2016. He provides an introduction to an entire edition of the Review devoted to nuclear proliferation in the coming decade at the very time that there are heightened concerns in the international community about nuclear plans by Iran and North Korea.

GLOBAL ISSUES / INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

12. DISTILLERY DEMAND FOR GRAIN TO FUEL CARS VASTLY UNDERSTATED

Lester Brown

Earth Policy Institute Eco-Economy Update, January 4, 2007, 3 pages

The author, founder of the Earth Policy Institute (EPI), writes that the U.S. fuel ethanol industry has grown so fast in the last two years that data collection has fallen behind. The U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates that ethanol production will consume 60 million tons of corn from the 2008 harvest, but the EPI, reviewing the combined data of several firms that survey the industry, estimates that more than twice that much corn will be needed. Brown warns that the unprecedented diversion of the world's main food crop for fuel production will affect food prices everywhere, potentially leading to political instability in importing countries around the world. He writes that the U.S. corn harvest is 40 percent of the world total, and accounts for 70 percent of world corn exports. The state of Iowa alone produces more corn than the entire grain harvest of Canada; if all the ethanol-processing plants being built or planned in Iowa come online, Iowa may have to become a corn importer. Brown urges a moratorium on the licensing of new distilleries -- a "time-out, while we catch our breath and decide how much corn can be used for ethanol without dramatically raising food prices."

Available online at <http://www.earth-policy.org/Updates/2007/Update63.htm>

13. ME TRANSLATE PRETTY ONE DAY

Evan Ratliff

Wired, December 2006, 6 pages

Since the dawn of the computer age, engineers have been trying to develop a program that will translate text from one language to another. It's proven a far more difficult problem than anyone

ever anticipated. A New York-based company, Meaningful Machines, is getting closer, however, with the adoption of a totally new concept as the basis of its translation program. Most programs have tried to apply traditional rules of grammar to a body of text to eke out a translation, but the programs fail to grasp the nuances and context of language use. They produce garbled, awkward or simply embarrassing translations. In contrast, the Meaningful Machines method attempts a translation by analyzing statistical probabilities for the juxtaposition of phrases and common usages in the text subject to translation as compared to large bodies of text stored in its databanks. A couple of generations of engineers have struggled with the problem, but it was an untrained Israeli inventor who conceived the “decoder” that may prove to crack one of the oldest problems in computer science. Available online at www.wired.com.

U.S. SOCIETY & VALUES

14. TELEVISION AND THE INCUMBENCY ADVANTAGE IN U.S. ELECTIONS

Stephen Ansolabehere

Legislative Studies Quarterly, November 2006, 22 pages

The incumbency advantage is a well-known phenomenon in the United States in all levels of politics. The advantage grew from one to two percentage points in the 1940s to the eight to ten percentage points today. There are many theories as to the reasons for this. The authors studied the relationship between television and electoral competition; after reviewing the data from gubernatorial and Senate elections from the 1940s to the 1990s, the authors conclude that "television has a small, directionally indeterminate, and statistically insignificant effect on the incumbency advantage."

15. RAW MATERIAL

Carl M. Cannon

National Journal, December 9, 2006, 5 pages

The author analyzes Illinois Democratic Senator Barack Obama's potential for becoming the next president. Obama is very popular, despite having served as a U.S. senator for only 22 months; he does not have the experience other presidents have had, such as service as a governor or a military officer. On the other hand, Obama appeals to many who feel he is similar to John F. Kennedy. Additionally, he is a "fresh face with an uplifting story at a time when Americans, always susceptible to a fad, are looking for the Next Big Thing, particularly when it comes to their governance," the author writes. Even some Republicans contend that Obama represents hope, talent, diversity, and a personality much different from President Bush, the author notes.

16. CONSTITUTIONAL COURTS: A PRIMER FOR DECISION MAKERS

Donald L. Horowitz

Journal of Democracy, October 2006, 13 pages

When newly emerging democracies are drafting constitutions, drafters are adding judicial review of government action as a necessary limitation on the power of the executive branch. Some countries allow the Supreme Court to declare legislation or executive actions as unconstitutional, while other countries have created constitutional courts to hear these cases. Horowitz's article describes the strengths and pitfalls of each approach. He contends that careful constitution drafting is necessary to limit the powers of the executive by allowing the judicial branch the opportunity of judicial review.

TRANSLATED DOCUMENTS

17. **JOINT STATEMENT BETWEEN THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**
November 17, 2006, 3 pages
18. **STATE SECRETARY RICE'S REMARKS AT THE APEC CEO SUMMIT**
November 18, 2006, 8 pages
19. **INTERVIEW STATE SECRETARY RICE BY VIETNAM NEWS AGENCY REPORTER**
November 18, 2006, 2 pages

Following articles are from "Handbook of Independent Journalism" - IIP Publication, July 2006 - by Deborah Potter, Director of NewsLab in Washington, D.C., and a former network correspondent for CBS News and CNN

20. **WHAT IS NEWS?**
8 pages
21. **GETTING THE STORY**
8 pages