



September/October 2008

**INFO-ALERT** brings to your attention a selection of abstracts of current articles and new materials from American publications on current political, economic, social issues and trends in the United States. These materials are available upon request from the **Information Resource Center**.

The electronic version of the INFO-ALERT is available at:  
[http://singapore.usembassy.gov/info\\_alert.html](http://singapore.usembassy.gov/info_alert.html)

If you are interested in receiving any of the articles listed, you may call telephone no. 6476-9082, fax your request to 6476-9035, or send an e-mail to [Singaporeusembassy@state.gov](mailto:Singaporeusembassy@state.gov)

### **POLITICS & INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

1. **KEEPING UP WITH ASIA**

Yoichi Funabashi

**Foreign Affairs**, September/October 2008, 7 pages

The Bush administration will leave a reasonably positive legacy behind in Asia, including stronger U.S.-Japanese security cooperation and improved ties with Beijing according to Yoichi Funabashi, Editor-in-Chief of the Tokyo-based newspaper *The Asahi Shimbun*. To build on this, the next U.S. president should pursue more dialogue with both Japan and China, deepen the United States' commitment to multilateral institution building in Asia, and boost American "soft power" there.

2. **A PARTNERSHIP OF EQUALS**

C. Fred Bergsten

**Foreign Affairs**, July/August, 2008, 13 pages

Despite its growing economic clout, China continues to act like a small country with little impact on the global system at large and therefore little responsibility for it. This behavior threatens to undermine the existing international economic architecture. To avoid a major train wreck, Washington should seek to develop a true partnership with Beijing so as to provide joint leadership of the global economic system.

3. **THE CASE AGAINST THE WEST; AMERICA AND EUROPE IN THE ASIAN CENTURY**

Kishore Mahbubani

**Foreign Affairs**, May/June 2008, 9 pages

Kishore Mahbubani, formerly Singapore's Ambassador to the U.N. and currently Dean of the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore, describes the ascendancy of East Asian democracies as an example of how domestic good governance can succeed. Mahbubani is highly critical of Western policies in many areas such as foreign aid, nonproliferation, global warming, international trade and the Middle East, believing them to have long become counterproductive. He suggests that the West's stranglehold on global institutions reveals a reluctance to acknowledge that "the era of its domination is ending and that the Asian century has come." He contends that the U.S. and Europe will need to adopt a more inclusive world view which reflects the growing political and economic power of Asian countries. "The West needs to acknowledge that sharing power it has accumulated in global forums would serve its interests," writes Kishore Mahbubani.

4. **ASIA – SHAPING THE FUTURE**

Douglas H. Paal

***Carnegie Endowment for International Peace Policy Brief No. 62***, June 2008, 8 pages

Although the United States is likely to remain an unequalled economic and security power in the Asia-Pacific region for the next few decades, several Asian countries have shown promise as playing a key factor in the region's balance of power politics in the future. Douglas Paal, Senior Associate, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, examines how the next U.S. administration can catch up on the pace of change and shape relations that will inevitably be altered by shifting correlations of power in the Asia-Pacific region.

5. **A MORAL CORE FOR U.S. FOREIGN POLICY**

Derek Chollet and Tod Lindberg

***Policy Review***, December 2007/January 2008, 16 pages

After two successive presidents from different political parties - Bill Clinton and George W. Bush - have argued that spreading American values is of vital interest, there is growing skepticism in many quarters about whether trying to do so is worth the significant costs this action incurs. There is also doubt as to whether it should be a true interest of the United States at all. But what would American foreign policy look like if it were stripped of its "values" component? Derek Chollet, Senior Fellow at the Center for a New American Security and Tod Lindberg, Research Fellow at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University examine American values of democracy, liberalism, human rights, and rule of law as they have historically been applied to U.S. foreign policy.

6. **RETHINKING THE NATIONAL INTEREST**

Condoleezza Rice

***Foreign Affairs***, July/August 2008, 25 pages

U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice discusses the United States' role in international relations following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 and the country's relations with traditional and emerging great powers, including China and Russia, as well as other countries in Europe and Asia. She reflects on the lessons of the past eight years and offers her defining take on democracy promotion and American foreign policy in general.

7. **THE MYTH OF GRASS-ROOTS TERRORISM**

Bruce Hoffman

***Foreign Affairs***, May/June 2008, 6 pages

Marc Sageman, author of "Leaderless Jihad: Terror Networks in the Twenty-first Century", claims that al Qaeda's leadership is finished and today's terrorist threat comes primarily from diffuse low-level groups. But the terrorist elites are alive and well, and ignoring the threat they pose will have disastrous consequences.

8. **THE WISDOM OF THE MASSES**

Gerald M. Pomper

***Harvard International Review***, Spring 2008, 5 pages

Why does the modern world choose its leaders through popular elections? And why does the United States think that the tens of millions of citizens, who do not even know the name of their representatives in Congress, can intelligently select the most powerful person on the planet, i.e. the President of the United States? Gerald Pomper, Professor Emeritus of Political Science and serves on the Board of Governors at Rutgers University, discusses a preference for electoral democracy and the use of elections as a mean of choosing leaders around the world.

## ECONOMIC SECURITY AND TRADE

### 9. **A STRATEGIC ECONOMIC ENGAGEMENT**

Henry M. Paulson, Jr.

*Foreign Affairs*, September/October 2008, 8 pages

One of the next U.S. president's first challenges will be to engage China and help it further integrate into the global economic system, says Henry Paulson, U.S. Secretary of the Treasury. The prosperity of both nations depends on stable and vibrant global trade and financial regimes, diverse and dependable energy sources, environmental protections, and the ability of each country to achieve balanced economic growth.

### 10. **ASSESSING GLOBALIZATION**

Andrew Kohut and Richard Wike

*Harvard International Review*, Spring 2008, 5 pages

Analyzing the results of the 47-country 2007 Pew Global Attitudes survey on the support for economic globalization, Andrew Kohut, President of the Pew Research Center and Richard Wike, Associate Director of the Pew Global Attitudes Project, point out that there is broad support for key, general economic features of globalization, such as international trade, multinational corporations and free markets. However, the survey also finds growing signs of economic anxiety among wealthy nations in the West.

## SOCIAL ISSUES & VALUES, EDUCATION & THE ARTS

### 11. **LITTLE LEAGUE, HUGE EFFECT**

Scott Ganz and Kevin Hassett

*The American*, May/June 2008, 4 pages

A growing body of research has shown that the social and economic benefits of youth's participation in sports are surprisingly large and overwhelmingly positive. Other things being equal, if a kid plays sports, s/he will earn more money, stay in school longer, and be more engaged in civic life. Scott Ganz, Research Assistant at the American Enterprise Institute (AEI) and Kevin Hassett, AEI's Director of Economic Policy Studies, discuss how youth sports strengthen the economic, academic, and social prospects of Americans.

### 12. **TECHNOLOGY FOR LEARNING**

Bob Coulter

*Connect Magazine*, May 2008, 2 pages

Reflecting on the usefulness of digital photography for outdoor education in the United States, Bob Coulter, Director of Mapping the Environment, a program at the Missouri Botanical Garden's Litzinger Road Ecology Center, discusses the benefits of digital cameras as a means for students to open a window into their thinking. The application of digital photography to enrich curriculum is needed to record change over time. Moreover, since young students' attention span and memory can be elusive, having a record of events as they unfold can be a valuable teaching resource.

13. **CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN THE PURSUIT OF A DEMOCRATIC PUBLIC MISSION FOR OUR SCHOOLS**

G. Thomas Bellamy and John Goodlad  
*Phi Delta Kappan*, April 2008, 9 pages

American schools must not be limited to goals with a narrow academic focus or the pursuit of test scores. An essential mission of U.S. schools – and the one historically that motivated earlier generations to found and support public schools – is to ensure that each new generation “understands the principles and institutions that support democratic life,” say Thomas Bellamy, Professor of Education and John Goodlad, an Emeritus Professor of Education at the University of Washington.

**SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY**

14. **THE 21<sup>ST</sup>-CENTURY WRITER**

Patrick Tucker  
*The Futurist*, July/August 2008, 7 pages

The Internet is forcing traditional print publishers to innovate or perish. For people who make their living selling words to readers - and indeed for readers themselves - these are times of upheaval. The information technology revolution has led to an explosion in textual content. For many magazine and newspaper publishers, the goal now is to transition into a more Web-focused business model quickly. For book publishers, the mission is to make an industry built on a fifteenth-century technology viable in the twenty-first century. That means reinventing the concept of the book for the digital age.

15. **DON'T FEAR TWITTER**

John Dickerson  
*Nieman Reports*, Summer 2008, 2 pages

Are the 140-word entries on the Web site “Twitter” trivializing journalism? No, says John Dickerson, the Chief Political correspondent for Slate. Twitter, he says, is “informal and approachable and great for conveying a little moment from an event. If written the right way, Twitter entries build a community of readers who find their way to longer articles because they are lured by these moment-by-moment observations.” Himself a Twitter reader, Dickerson says Twitter has exposed him to a wider variety of news.

16. **THE INTERNET AND THE 2008 ELECTION**

Aaron Smith and Lee Rainie  
*Pew Internet & American Life Project*, June 15, 2008, 27 pages

The authors explore the impact of the Internet on the 2008 U.S. election and how Americans use the internet to get political news and share their thoughts about the campaign by surveying users' views about the Internet's influence on politics. They also measure the intensity with which people engage in the online political debate by asking individuals how frequently they take part in the political process using the internet, email, and text messaging.

17. **OFF TARGET**

Paul Farhi

*American Journalism Review*, April/May 2008, 6 pages

According to Paul Farhi, a Washington Post reporter, round-the-clock cable television coverage and newspaper journalists having to write for the Web, as well as work on print stories has resulted in a barrage of superficial reporting, analysis and forecasting, much of which has turned out to be inaccurate. He discusses campaign reporting in the United States during the 2008 campaign season, and looks at the worsening of the political media's tendencies and what news organizations could do to tackle the problems.

18. **CYBERCRIME IN THE YEAR 2025**

Gene Stephens

*The Futurist*, July/August 2008, 5 pages

Detailing the types of cybercrimes and cybercrime fighting that will occur in the United States by the year 2025, Gene Stephens, Distinguished Professor Emeritus of the University of South Carolina, discusses his past forecasts on cybercrime and explains what he got right, what he got wrong, and why. He also offers some frightening speculation on what future cybercrime fighters will have to do to deal with the problem.

19. **MAYBE IT IS TIME TO PANIC**

Carl Sessions Stepp

*American Journalism Review*, April/May 2008, 6 pages

Nowadays anyone with a computer can become a publisher. Journalists no longer control content and format. According to Carl Stepp, AJR's Senior Editor, news organizations need to start thinking more imaginatively, turning duress into motivation, and thus make their content irresistible and their business operations unstoppable and fast. The author reflects on the status of news organizations and discusses the challenges news organizations are facing in their fight to preserve "serious journalism."