

Title: The United States, Iran, and the Greater Middle East

Author: Thomas R. Pickering

Abstract: This article presents the speech delivered by Ambassador Pickering at the annual dinner of the National Committee on American Foreign Policy on January 26, 2010. His analysis reflects a diplomat's point of view.

Iran's Threat to the Strait of Hormuz: A Realist Assessment

Author: J. Peter Pham

Abstract: The Strait of Hormuz is arguably the most strategically significant transit chokepoint in the world with about one-fifth of global oil consumption passing through each day. Yet there are concerns fanned by provocative Iranian statements and actions that the narrow waterway may be blocked by Tehran either in order to increase its leverage in negotiations over the regime's nuclear ambitions or in retaliation for any military action against its nuclear facilities. The spike in petroleum prices resulting from such an occurrence could wreak havoc with economies around the world. However, a close examination of Iranian capabilities leads to the conclusion that although the threat should not be dismissed, it is not cause for alarm. This judgment is confirmed when consideration is given to the consequences that Iran might face should it actually provoke a crisis by attempting to block traffic through the strait.

Dealing with Al Qaeda

Author: Fariborz Mokhtari

Abstract : When in college, a classmate of mine developed a severe rash. The school infirmary diagnosed a simple case of common roseola, a mild virus infection easily treatable. The classmate was to be released from the infirmary in a week, but the rash persisted into the second week. The physician in charge reconsidered his earlier conviction, calling for a battery of tests. It became clear by the third week that the patient had indeed been infected by the roseola virus and that the virus had been eliminated in the first week of treatment but that the medication had caused an allergic reaction. The cure had become the disease! Much of our dealings with Al Qaeda, with its confusion, doubts, and self-inflicted allergic reactions, resembles this episode.

Central Asia in the Foreign Policy Strategy of Barack Obama's Administration: Results and Prospects

Author: Marat Shaikhutdinov

Abstract : This article deals with the Kazakh perception of the first year of Barack Obama's policy toward Central Asia. The author acknowledges the “difficult foreign policy legacy” inherited by the new administration, doubting whether the United States is ready for a “systematic and consistent” policy toward the area. He reviews American relations with all of the “stans” of Central Asia as well as the conflicting energy interests of powers involved in the Caspian Sea Basin. The author sees “incompleteness and imperfection” in U.S. policies in the tendency to react rather than to initiate and reproaches the new administration for not listening to voices from the region or even to U.S. experts

The Geopolitics of the Caspian Sea Basin

Author: Michael Rywkin

Abstract: This article deals with the geopolitical situation in and around the Caspian Sea Basin. It concentrates on Putin's policies toward the region, with an emphasis on post-August 2008 (Russian-Georgian war) developments and brings to the readers' attention the historical background leading to the present state of affairs. It deals with Chinese inroads and analyzes U.S. interests and policies toward the region, underlining their weaknesses

Energy Security Issues in the Foreign Policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan

Author: Kuralai I. Baizakova

Abstract: This article deals with energy security issues, the legal status of the Caspian Sea, and the pipeline policies of the great powers and local states and Turkey's policies as well. In a nutshell, the author sees China as interested mainly in economic goals, Russia as preoccupied with maintaining stability, and the United States as committed to promoting democracy. Kazakhstan's role is seen as a link between Europe and Asia (up to the Pacific), maintaining a “global partnership” with all of the main players

Adelphi series

Volume 49 Issue 410; 2009

Towards Nuclear Zero

Abstract: Rarely in the atomic age have hopes for genuine progress towards disarmament been raised as high as they are now. Governments, prompted by the renewed momentum of non-proliferation and disarmament initiatives, have put nuclear policy at the top of the international agenda. But how can countries move from warm words to meaningful action? By what means could the world be weaned from its addiction to nuclear weapons and who should undertake the task of supervising this process? This Adelphi examines practical steps for achieving progress toward disarmament, assessing the challenges and opportunities associated with achieving a world without nuclear weapons. It places the current debate over abolition in the context of urgent non-proliferation priorities, such as the need to prevent nuclear weapons from falling into the hands of extremist regimes and terrorists. It distils lessons from states that have already given up nuclear programmes and from the end of the Cold War to suggest ways of countering the efforts of Iran and North Korea to acquire nuclear weapons. For the longer term, it offers policy recommendations for moving towards a reduced global reliance on nuclear weapons

Title: THE PATHAN AND HIS LAND: CENTRE OF THE WORLD'S ATTENTION

Author: Humayun Khan

Abstract: The culture of the Pathans, or Pushtuns is complicated, sometimes contradictory, and rooted in a traditional code. They inhabit a harsh land and have posed an administrative challenge for decades, hence the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). But after independence, the situation was relatively peaceful for thirty years until the Russian invasion of Afghanistan changed everything. The freedom fighters defeated the Russians, but brought with them the culture of religious extremism and violence which cause such problems today. Furthermore, many foreign fighters settled in the area, a ready pool of manpower for the current war. For a while US support for the war against terror strengthened the position of General Musharraf. But not for ever and the increasing threat to the state posed by the Pakistani Taliban has resulted in the new civilian government backing major offensives by the Pakistani military in the tribal areas.

Title: WHAT HAS GONE RIGHT IN INDONESIA OVER THE LAST FIVE YEARS?

Author: Charles Humfrey

Abstract: The article considers Indonesia's democratic advance over the last five years, effectively the first term in office of President Yudhoyono. Focussing on the three threats which seemed most acute in 2004 - Fragmentation, Macroeconomic Instability and Terrorism, the author suggests that the handling of the post-tsunami situation in Aceh was a turning point which will need to be consolidated by decentralisation; that prudence by technocrats and responsibility by the political leadership ensured economic success; and that the terrorist threat was overcome, partly by a political recognition that a real threat existed which had to be faced, and partly by good police work.

Title: HOW JAPAN'S POST-WAR RELATIONSHIP WITH BURMA WAS SHAPED BY AID

Author: Patrick Strefford

Abstract: A relatively small group of Japanese war veterans has played a major part in creating a favourable image of Burma in Japan. In the early 1950s both Japan and Burma needed a swift agreement on reparations, the Japanese because the export markets and natural resources of South East Asia offered a real opportunity to rebuild the Japanese economy, Burma because economic policy was already faltering and financial aid was needed. The Reparations Agreement between Japan and Burma became the model for ODA agreements with other South East Asian nations and the Japanese committed large sums to Burma, yet the Japanese mercantilist approach was never compatible with the Burmese road to Socialism. Since the imprisonment of Aung San Suu Kyi, some in Japan have promoted a policy of solidarity towards Burma, while others, including the new Prime Minister, Hatoyama have advocated an approach based on concern for human rights.

Title: THE SOCIETY'S 2009 TOUR OF SARAWAK AND SABAH, 26 SEPTEMBER-14 OCTOBER 2009

Author: Bill Norton

Abstract: An account of the Society's 2009 Tour to Sarawak and Sabah, focussing on biodiversity and the role of tropical forests in combating climate change. Mulu's famous Deer Cave was tone highlight of the visit to Sarawak. In Sabah, the party visited the Mount Kinabalu National Park and the Sepilok Orang-utan Rehabilitation Centre, as well as the Dunum valley. The deforestation of Borneo is of serious concern and the party were much encouraged by the prospects for the "Heart of Borneo" project.

Title: The Sino-Japan Disputes and the Principle of Subsidiarity

Author: Yao Chaocheng

Abstract: Regional economic unification must overcome some economic obstacles, such as how to remove the trade and non-trade barriers, how to realise monetary stability in the region and how to develop a regional market, dominated by internal demand. However, in the long run, social obstacles will be more troublesome than the economic obstacles and could also be counterproductive. The integration process in Asia has been lagging behind the other continents of Europe and North America for many reasons. One of them is that the Asian unification process has mainly been a top-down approach by politicians and leaderships in this region, without wider and broader participation from the societies and civil groups. Nonetheless, there are strong trends favouring the ongoing regional cooperation in Asia. While envisioning bright prospects, the Asian economic integration process, however, is destined to encounter social obstacles. One of them is clearly the Sino-Japan dispute. The article argues, that the principle of subsidiarity (bottom-up approaches) (Horst Rolly 2003) being applied in European unification, may serve as the key solution—and strategic approach—to improve Sino-Japan relations. Asian nations, especially China and Japan, could draw on the lessons and experiences of European countries and adapt from their principle of subsidiarity, which may serve to overcome the impending obstructions. Otherwise, the Sino-Japan dispute may become the largest barrier in building up the regional cooperation structure in Asia.

Title: An Analysis of China–Ethiopia Relations during the Cold War

Author: M. Venkataraman

Abstract: This article analyses the bilateral relations between China and Ethiopia during the Cold War period and brings out the interplay of domestic, regional and extra-regional factors that went into the shaping of bilateral relations. China's growing involvement and various attempts at consolidation of political and economic relationship with African countries—a relatively recent phenomenon—is perceived as a result of the dynamic interplay of economic and political factors. As with other African countries, China's interaction with Ethiopia in the post-Cold War period is markedly different from pre-1990 years. This article investigates the political/economic factors underlying this shift. It describes and analyses the factors that led to China's political and economic ties with Ethiopia (and Africa) during the years of Mao and Deng Xiaoping. It concludes that motivated by the desire to realise its priorities and goals, China's venture into Africa and Ethiopia was shaped by the shift in relations between the United States (US) and China and the Cold War dynamics in the Horn that prevented any kind of consolidation of relations with Ethiopia on the one hand and regime change in Ethiopia on the other.

Title: The Evolution of the Image of China in the United States during the Cold War

Author: Claudia Astarita

Abstract: This article describes the evolution of the image of China in the United States (US) during the Cold War. Aware that China–US bilateral relations have been influenced by periods of conflict and animosity, harmony and détente, the article argues that the image of China has always been embedded in a network of events—birth of the PRC (People’s Republic of China [PRC], Korean War, Sino-Soviet alliance) that prevented American public opinion from developing an objective and unbiased picture of the PRC. Since 1950s, China has always been linked to the idea of the ‘Yellow Peril’. Moreover, the lack of a direct contact between China and America further thwarted the opportunity of shaping a fair picture of the PRC. Although recognising that during the Cold War American political parties played a significant role in conveying a negative image of China, this article shows how media helped in strengthening Chinese stereotypes among the American public. Analysing all articles published by Time, National Geographic and Readers’ Digest from 1949 to 1972, the article highlights both similarities and differences of the way in which these magazines introduced China to their readers.

Title: The Portrayal of Chinese top Party-State Leaders in the American Mainstream News Media, 1978–2008

Author: Kam-ye Law

Abstract: The three decades of "world–shaking" reform and the opening up are believed to have brought enormous changes to China. Today, few can deny China’s crucial position in the global economy. However, aside from the obvious economic changes, it is uncertain whether the previously mysterious, untouchable and reclusive China thoroughly reformed itself from the demonized character during the globalization trend and years after the Cold War. Today, when ‘national image becomes an important part in soft power competition among countries...and a very significant strategic issue China faces in the development process’, this article aims at examining the scope and specific ‘frames’ that American mainstream news media use to report on China’s party-state leaders over the past 3 decades. Through the contents analysis of Time and Newsweek, the study finds that the image of China’s party-state leaders has not been drastically different under the framing. Since the judging criteria for the American mainstream news media towards political leadership has not significantly changed, they would still show certain disapprovals to the political aspects of China not change at all even after thirty years reform.

**Title: The Impact of China's Market Reforms on the Health of Chinese Citizens:
Examining Two Puzzles**
Author: Martin King Whyte

Abstract: China's post-1978 market reforms were accompanied by a drastic decline in the coverage of the Chinese population by medical insurance as well as by sharp increases in charges for medical treatments, tests, and prescriptions. Since the 1990s, these trends have produced widespread condemnation of the current Chinese medical care system for being too costly and unequal. This article attempts to answer two questions: 1) Why did changes in the healthcare system precipitated by market reforms not lead to the kind of deterioration in the health of Chinese citizens that market reforms produced in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union? 2) In view of the increased inequalities in access to, and insurance coverage for, medical care since 1978, and particularly the growing rural-urban gap, why do Chinese villagers and migrants rate their current health better than do urban citizens?

Title: Health Reform and De Facto Federalism in China
Author: Christina S. Ho

Abstract: Understanding China as a de facto federalism can generate explanations and recommendations concerning the path of China's health reform. The first section reviews how de facto federalism drove the historical development of the problems plaguing China's health system. The next section shows how certain features of the current reform plan, namely, the plan's ambivalence between government and market approaches and its lack of strong centralisation, can be explained by de facto federalism. The third section uses the hypothesis of de facto federalism to generate two courses of action — one cautionary; the other, aspirational — that could be considered for the future. The consequences for the health sector of under-articulated federalism are clarified and point to the need for discursive reasoned elaboration, as opposed to political bargaining alone, in federalism.

Title: Turning Points in China's AIDS Response

Author: Joan Kaufman

Abstract: China's AIDS response has evolved from one of denial and inaction to an aggressive and humanitarian policy based on international best practices. This article analyzes the events both internal and external that led to the policy shifts, highlighting key turning points in attitudes and action. A combination of domestic advocacy, international pressure, changing epidemic dynamics and fall-out from the SARS epidemic coaxed the government to greater transparency and deliberate action on prevention and treatment. However, a number of important challenges remain which will influence the ultimate success of China's much improved AIDS response.

Title: Population Policy and Eugenic Theory: Implications of China's Ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Author: Carole J. Petersen

Abstract: The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) is the first new human rights treaty of the 21st century. China was an early supporter of the CRPD and became East Asia's first State Party in 2008. This article discusses how the CRPD protects the rights of persons with disabilities to life, marriage and procreation, and analyses China's population policy, which continues to reflect eugenic theories. As China did not file any reservations, it is now obligated to reform laws and policies that conflict with the CRPD.