

THE VANDERBILT POLITICAL REVIEW



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THE VANDERBILT POLITICAL REVIEW

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VPR | SPRING 2013

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VPR ONLINE

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



This has been a remarkable year of progress for the Vanderbilt Political Review. Over the past 12 months, we have rebuilt our organizational infrastructure—creating a solid foundation for our future, appointing the most selective editorial board in our history, and establishing a long-range blueprint for our future. More importantly, we leveraged these foundational successes by creating a number of improvements and new service offerings for our audience. As I preside over my last issue as VPR president, I feel honored to have been a part of this organization for the past four years, and I am very proud of the successes we have had this year. I am excited to introduce our Spring 2013 edition of the *Vanderbilt Political Review* by providing you an overview of what I believe are our 2012-2013 top 10 highlights.

- **Our editorial board:** After the most rigorous and competitive selection process in our organization's history, VPR gained a talented staff of 30 editorial board members who represent some of the most intelligent and remarkable people at Vanderbilt. These members worked tirelessly to make VPR what it is today, and our success would not have been possible without their commitment.

- **Improvements to the print publication:** This year, we implemented a number of dramatic improvements to the organization and specifically to our print issue. Our improved editorial process and fundraising successes allowed us to double the size of our issue, change to an all-color layout, and expand from two to three issues per year. As a result of our efforts, we were able to showcase three

times as much content as prior years, a herculean feat only accomplished through the dedication of a phenomenal executive board.

- **A new faculty advisor:** We were fortunate to gain a new faculty advisor, Professor Joshua Clinton, who has been instrumental in providing advice regarding the direction of our print issue, working with us to produce original research, and establishing a partnership with the Vanderbilt Political Science Department. Professor Clinton's support will continue to help VPR improve in the future.
- **Record-breaking research:** We conducted two independent research projects in VPR this year, a first for our organization. The first polling project, published in the fall edition of VPR, analyzed student opinion on the 2012 presidential election and became the largest undergraduate opinion poll ever taken at Vanderbilt. We are excited about enhancing these research efforts in this spring edition by producing a second poll analyzing political interest and efficacy among Vanderbilt undergraduate students.
- **Election coverage for *The Tennessean*:** Throughout the fall, VPR had the opportunity to provide presidential election coverage for *The Tennessean*. Our editorial board members participated in three live blogging events during the presidential and vice presidential debates. This opportunity has allowed us to showcase the political acumen of some of the most outstanding Vanderbilt students, and we look forward to continuing this partnership in future collaborative opportunities.
- **A new VPR website:** We are particularly proud of our new VPR website, developed this year. After establishing a daily writing schedule and significantly expanding our web and social media output, our total page views this year were more than double our previous all-time number of views. Our website continues to be the most comprehensive source for local, national, and international political news at Vanderbilt, and we are proud of the diversity and quality of the material we are able to offer.
- **Notable guest submissions and interviews:** VPR published essays from notable political leaders this year, including Senator Lamar Alexander, Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, Former Tennessee Democratic Party chairman Chip Forrester, and Nashville Mayor Karl Dean. We also featured interviews from several political scientists such as Pulitzer Prize-winning biographer David Maraniss, Professor John Geer, and Professor Katherine Carroll. We appreciate the support that Vanderbilt and national political leaders have shown us, and their content has been a significant asset to VPR this year.
- **Vanderbilt Student Communications partnership:** For the first time ever, VPR became full members of Vanderbilt Student Communications, the award-winning governing body for student publications on campus. We are very excited about the opportunity to continue our growth and development with the help of a committed team of advisors.
- **National and industry recognition:** As a result of our success this year in VPR print and online publications, our writers have received recognition through references to their work in many different political fora. In particular, this year our writers' work has been mentioned in the Wall Street Journal, in multiple notable political blogs, and in publications by the Alliance of Collegiate Editors.
- **A promising future:** While our achievements this year have been significant, I am extremely confident that VPR's best days are yet to come. I look forward to seeing what new surprises and successes are in store for VPR and our members in the future. Although I will graduate this year, make no mistake: I will continue to be VPR's #1 cheerleader.

The Vanderbilt Political Review is proud of the success we have had and progress we have made over the past year, and we look forward to pursuing new opportunities in the years to come. VPR serves a very important role on campus, and we believe that our organization represents some of the best work that Vanderbilt students have to offer. We hope you enjoy the Spring 2013 issue of the *Vanderbilt Political Review*, and thank you for your continued support of our organization.

Libby Marden
VPR President

Vanderbilt Political Interest Survey Results

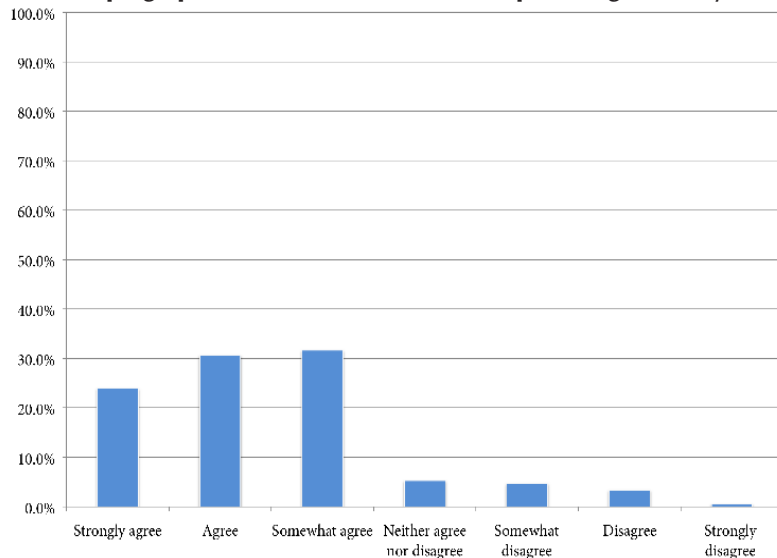
Conducted by the Incoming VPR Executive Board

Throughout March and April, VPR conducted a study focusing specifically on issues of political interest and engagement amongst Vanderbilt students. Specifically, how much do Vanderbilt students care about staying informed of current events? How often do they make an effort to check the news? How many of them take the time to vote and watch key presidential addresses?

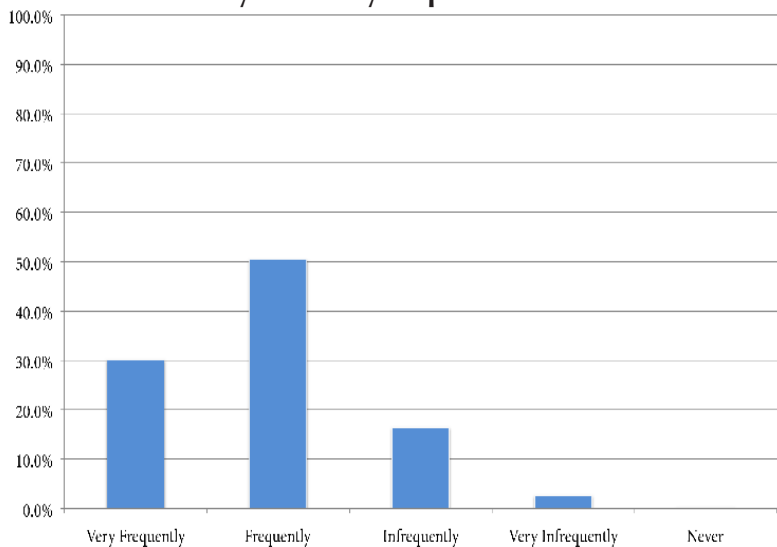
To analyze results, aggregate survey responses were adjusted by demographic characteristics (e.g. gender) to correct for sampling error. Vanderbilt students seem to be fairly interested in maintaining a strong understanding of current events; approximately 86.1% of students somewhat agreed, agreed, or strongly agreed that “keeping up with current events is an important goal” in their lives, and 80.6% reported they checked their preferred source of news “frequently” or “very frequently.” When it comes to actual political behavior, however, the results indicate comparatively less political involvement. Approximately 23.4% of Vanderbilt students did not vote in the 2012 U.S. Presidential election, although the percentage of Vanderbilt students voting was still significantly higher than for the U.S. population as a whole (Bipartisan Research Center 2012). In addition, the majority of Vanderbilt students – about 56.5% – did not watch the 2013 State of the Union address, in which the president typically discusses the condition of the nation and outlines his or her proposed policy agenda for the coming year.

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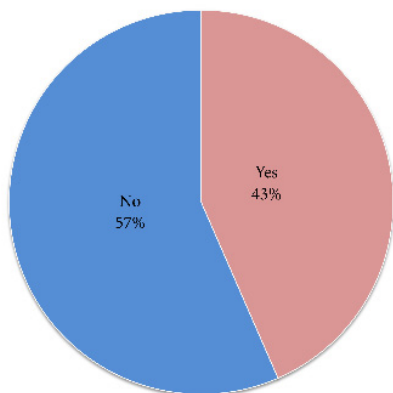
Keeping up with current events is an important goal in my life.



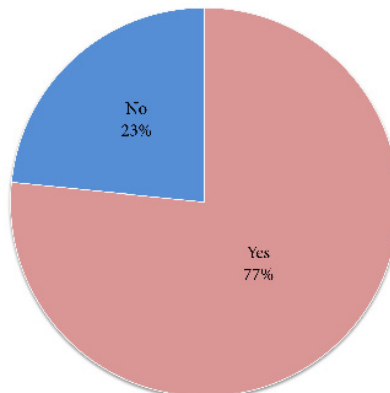
How often do you check your preferred source of news?



Did you watch the 2013 State of the Union address?



Did you vote in the 2012 presidential election?



Nashville is Ready for Rapid Transit

Guest Essay by Mayor Karl Dean



A city needs mass transit for two reasons: 1) maintaining and protecting our quality of life

2) enhancing economic development. By 2035, the Nashville region will add almost one million new residents. Our city can't build its way out of the traffic congestion that will inevitably result from all these new residents and commuters. Those congestion issues would also detrimentally impact the competitiveness of our city to attract new businesses and tourists.

This means that we have to explore game-changing mass transportation options that provide incentives for people to start using transit. Bus Rapid Transit does just that; it is a mass transit option that uses technology and infrastructure improvements to provide a quicker, reliable and efficient service. Nashville is currently exploring this type of transit for the 7.1-mile stretch through the heart of the city and will travel from Five Points in East Nashville to Saint Thomas Hospital in West Nashville.

It requires dedicated traffic lanes

that would allow the buses to travel faster than a car stuck in traffic.

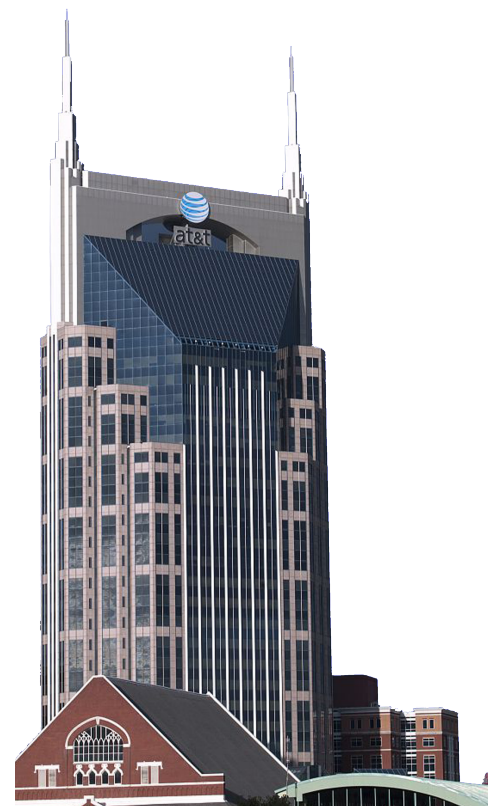
This proposed route will have stops near Vanderbilt so it will connect our universities to various attractions that Nashville offers. The rapid transit vehicles would stop at permanent, rail-like stations; double-wide sliding doors would open onto elevated platforms allowing multiple passengers to board; self-service fare collection kiosks would be located at the stations. The comfortable vehicles will also have wide aisles, Wi-Fi access and bicycle accommodations. It is basically a subway on wheels.

But, the great thing about BRT is that it can be done in various phases and levels. Working with MTA, we have already started what we call BRT "lite" on Gallatin Road and Murfreesboro Road. This service involves a bus that is lower to the ground, makes less frequent stops and allows the bus driver to extend green lights, which makes it more competitive with car traffic. The bus stops are nicer than regular bus stops and they include real-time travel information on an electronic screen – so you're not just standing there wondering when the next bus will come.

These new options for Nashville will redefine transit, and it is just the beginning. The BRT is part of a system that could then move along other corridors. But, we have to succeed with this corridor first. This is the type of game-changing mass transit option that is needed in Nashville.

I appreciate Vanderbilt University's support for mass transit initiatives, from encouraging students, faculty and staff to ride city buses through the EasyRide program to being a community partner in educating Nashvillians about transit issues. To learn more about mass transit and other initiatives in Nashville, visit us at www.nashville.gov or like us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/MayorKarlDean>.

Karl Dean is the sixth Mayor of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County.



"HAGELING" IN THE SENATE

What the filibuster on Obama's nominee for Secretary of Defense means for the future

SUFEI WU

A little after noon on February 26th, the US Senate confirmed Chuck Hagel, two-term Republican senator from Nebraska, to become the first Vietnam veteran to become Secretary of Defense. Hagel, who won two Purple Hearts during his time in Vietnam, is, according to President Obama, someone who understands "the consequences of decisions we make in this town" (Peralta 2013).

Senator Hagel was confirmed with a vote of 58 to 41—mostly along party lines—with only four Republicans voting to confirm him. This vote came shortly after the Senate voted 71 to 27 in favor of cloture after an unprecedented three month Republican filibuster of the nomination. Those against Senator Hagel cited his opposition of both unilateral sanctions and military intervention to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons, among other concerns (Peralta 2013).

Senate Majority leader Harry Reid called the first ever filibuster of a defense nominee an "embarrassing display of disregard of national security" and among the "saddest spectacles" he has ever witnessed in the Senate (Peralta 2013). While Reid's statements may be skewed and slightly hyperbolic, a filibuster of a top cabinet official such as defense — which should theoretically garner bipartisan support — is most likely not what the Founding Fathers had in mind. Article II, section 2, clause

2 of the U.S. Constitution reads, "[the president] shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, Judges of the Supreme Court, and all other Officers of the United States." This clause, commonly known as the "advice and consent" clause, intentionally lacks greater specificity as it was a compromise between those founders who wanted exclusively Congress to appoint positions and those who wanted appointments to fall solely to the executive branch. Therefore, the provision emerged to give the Senate confirmation privileges without guidance on the proper duration or nature of confirmation hearings.

Stalled confirmations stemming from this ambiguity are not new, however. Some of the most contentious confirmations precede our contemporary notion of unprecedented partisanship. In 1831, when President Andrew Jackson nominated New York Senator Martin Van Buren to be ambassador to Great Britain, Van Buren's opponents in the Senate decried him as ma-

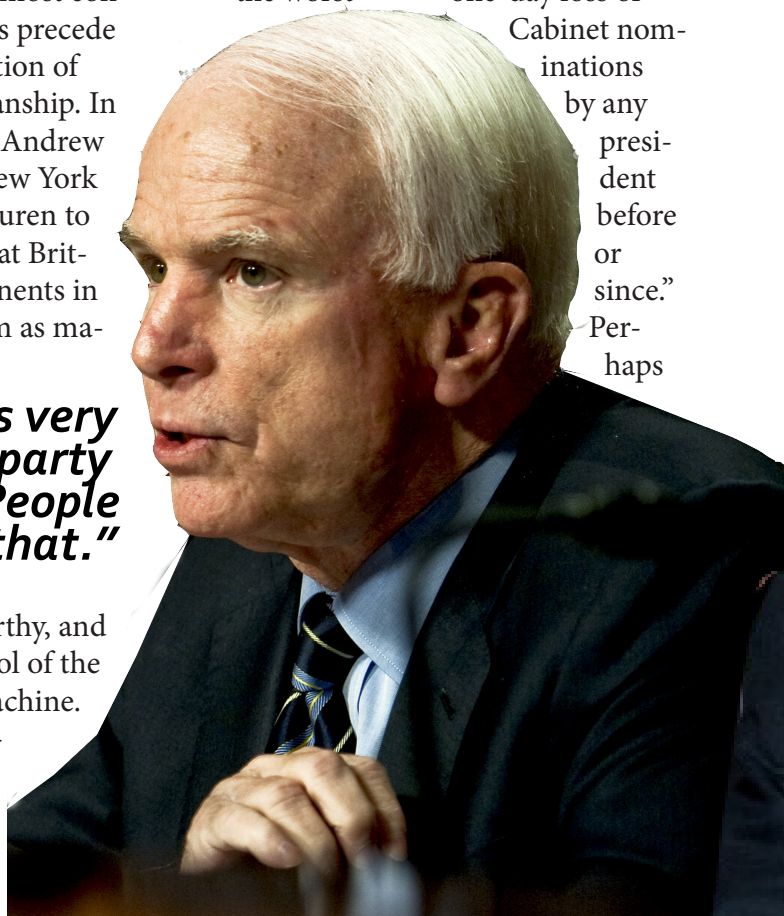
C. Calhoun broke the tie by voting against his confirmation and was subsequently dropped from the ticket when Jackson sought reelection. Jackson replaced Calhoun with Van Buren.

Another curious, albeit embarrassing, confirmation process occurred in 1843 with President John Tyler's Treasury secretary nominee, Caleb Cushing. At that time, custom dictated that in the last days of session, the President would go to the Senate floor to interact directly with party leaders. When Cushing's nomination was rejected due to his history of political inconsistencies, President Tyler, who was sitting nearby, immediately re-submitted Cushing's name for consideration. Not only did the Senate again reject Cushing, President Tyler submitted Cushing for a third time to become "the worst

one-day loss of Cabinet nominations by any president before or since." Perhaps

"[Hagel] was very anti his own party and people. People don't forget that."

nipulative, untrustworthy, and only out to seek control of the New York political machine. Van Buren's confirmation vote was tied; Vice President John



indicative of both Tyler's bullheaded nature and Congress's relentless attempts to obstruct him, Tyler's nomination of Henry A. Wise as ambassador to France was again rejected three times that same night (Korologos 2013).

Contested nominations are clearly not a recent development. However, Chuck Hagel's bitter confirmation, unprecedented for a defense secretary, certainly is. The authors of the Constitution strived to avoid a monarchical structure. But in a somewhat characteristic fashion, the ambiguities they created have allowed the minority party to stall, perhaps indefinitely, confirmations of appointees who play a crucial role in national security or other vital governmental duties.

Reasons for the Republican filibuster are not without merit. Top party members contend that voting against cloture was due to legitimate concerns with Sen. Hagel's experience with a massive bureaucracy and to demand more information regarding his positions on countries such as Iran and Israel. While this could be evidence of the sort of

checks and balances favored by our Founding Fathers, John McCain told Fox News shortly after Senate Republicans first voted against cloture that "there is a lot of ill will towards Senator Hagel because when he was a Republican, he attacked President Bush mercilessly. At one point said he was the worst President since Herbert Hoover, [he] was very anti his own party and people. People don't forget that" (Jones 2013). This may only be the speculation of one senator who has expressed particularly vocal opposition to Hagel due primarily to his opposition to President Bush's 2007 troops surge in Iraq (Fox 2013). Nonetheless, even a whiff of personal vendettas clouding reasoned deliberation is cause for serious concern when it comes to national security. This political posturing and pettiness

"Republicans continued their embarrassing display of disregard for our national security by blocking Senator Hagel's nomination today."

misuses the power and undermines the responsibility given to the Senate, underscoring the need for reforming the confirmation process.

Politics should stop at the water's edge, especially as delay and dissent in key players in foreign policy may signal instability and undermine American relations abroad. Recognizing the need for reform, the

112th Congress voted to eliminate the Senate confirmation requirement for 166 governmental positions, allowing them to assume responsibilities as soon as they are selected by the President. Some argue that the better solution would be to streamline the Senate review process rather than eliminate oversight altogether. However, the newly expedited positions are primarily for assistant secretaries of management and legislative affairs rather than policymaking. Additionally, appointments that had previously been voted on as a block by the Senate within the Public Health Service and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration have also been eliminated from Senate approval (Baker 2012). These are all steps in the right direction. Forfeiting thoroughly vetted candidates for the sake of expediency would be misguided, but matters such as national security must rise above the partisan squabble.

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A SHAKY COALITION:

Will Netanyahu's factioed coalition change the focus of Israeli politics?

KATE HARSH

After narrowly winning re-election on January 22, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu faced the challenge of forming a coalition with other political factions in the Knesset -- the Israeli parliament. Finally, after seven

enforcing the separation of church and state, lowering the cost of living for Israelis (Danin 2013), and reforming Israel's electoral and education systems (Rudoren 2013) rather than regional security (Abramson 2013). Netanyahu has always focused on security and international relations, and such issues dominated the priorities of the previous coalition (Greenwood 2013). While former Defense Minister Ehud Barak shared Netanyahu's deep concern over Iran, the

ian peace process, despite the fact that leader Avigdor Lieberman insists he is in favor of the creation of "a viable Palestinian state" (BBC Guide to Israel's political parties 2013). Both Hatuna and Yesh Atid are centrist parties that back the two-state solution; however, the Jewish Home is an Orthodox right-wing party that strongly rejects any notion of an independent Palestine (BBC Guide to Israel's political parties 2013). While dissent within a coalition is always expected, the multitude of different stances within Netanyahu's own government may hinder its ability to make any strides in the Arab-Israeli peace process.

"In his efforts to successfully create a government by the March 15 deadline, Netanyahu ultimately built an unstable coalition over which he has limited control."

weeks, negotiations came to a close on March 14. Netanyahu's prior alliance between his own Likud party and the Yisrael Beitenu party expanded their coalition to include the centrist Yesh Atid, Hatuna, and the far-right Jewish Home party (Kneil 2013). Although this coalition gives Netanyahu 70 votes—a majority—in the Knesset, the differing priorities of each party will create internal obstacles for Netanyahu, particularly with respect to foreign affairs and security.

A primary issue with Israel's new government is that much of the coalition is more focused on social and domestic issues such as

incoming Defense Minister Moshe Ya'alon of the Likud party does not (Greenwood 2013). Netanyahu considers Iranian nuclear capabilities a major threat and "urged the world to draw a 'clear red line' over Iran's nuclear program" (Israel's Netanyahu urges 'red line' over nuclear Iran 2012).

Additionally, members of Israel's new government have vastly contrasting views regarding the Palestinian question. Although the Likud and Yisrael Beitenu are both right-wing parties, Netanyahu's party favors a two-state solution. Yisrael Beitenu has at times opposed steps in the Israeli-Palestin-

In his efforts to successfully create a government by the March 15 deadline, Netanyahu ultimately built an unstable coalition over which he has limited control (Marcus 2013). Even before the coalition was established, his current government disputed which parties would hold which cabinet positions and ministries (Sasley 2013) (Associated Press 2013). However, the trouble will not cease when the government is in full force. In order to pass legislation, Netanyahu will have to maneuver between and around members of his own coalition before he can even reach the rest of the Knesset. With economic issues, he will have to balance the desires of Jewish Home's Naftali Bennett

NETANYAHU'S KNESSET

and Yesh Atid's Yair Lapid; while with peace issues, he must steer around Hatuna's Tzipi Livni (Marcus 2013). The Jewish Home party favors a free market economy (Bayit Yehudi), so Bennett may attempt to push Netanyahu rightward with his control of the Economics and Trade Ministry (Shwaydar 2013). Historically, the Jewish Home party has been in favor of extending the settlement building, so its control of the Housing and Construction Ministry will further its agenda. This control aligns with the right-wing orthodox members of Netanyahu's party but clashes with many of the more moderate members who seek a two-state solution (Guide to Israel's Political Parties 2012). The roadblocks Netanyahu faces within his own government will surely hinder his ability to execute much of his original right-wing agenda.

The new coalition's foremost priority should be national security; however, the Prime Minister will struggle to exercise control over security due to the other factions in his coalition government who have varying interests and priorities. If the difficulty he faced while forming a coalition with Yisrael Beitenu, Yesh Atid, Hatuna, and Jewish Home is any indication of how the new Israeli government will operate, Netanyahu will have a difficult third term as Prime Minister of Israel.

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GENDER QUOTAS AND The American Tradition

How gender quotas in developing countries are improving women's equality

NATALIE PATE

Women make up half the global population but only one-fifth of its legislators (ipu.org). This worldwide representational discrepancy excludes women from legislative bodies that make decisions affecting the lives of women and children every day. Over the past few decades, international organizations have recognized this issue and have made it their policy to advocate for the increased inclusion of women in their respective governments. Still, progress has been slow, and some countries have turned to a controversial measure to speed things up—legislative gender quotas. Quotas require a certain number of women to make up either political candidates or legislators, depending on the type of quota adopted. The use of gender quotas has spread quite rapidly, and most notably in countries that do not have a history of progressive views on women's issues. Ironically, these countries have outstripped much of the Western world in pursuing equal representation using the very policies and ideals the international community promotes.

International organizations such as the United Nations have made it a policy to advocate for the increased inclusion of women in political bodies, starting

as early as 1979 with the adoption of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) by the United Nations (Rossetti 2008, 3). CEDAW is described as a “bill of rights” for women and requires the 187 states that signed it to “ensure to women, on equal terms with men, the right to participate in the formulation of government policy and the implementation thereof and to hold public office and perform all public functions at all levels of government” (un.org). The 1995 United Nations Fourth World Conference in Beijing produced a similar declaration; the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action, was signed unanimously by all 189 members states

“The international community is increasingly recognizing the need to include more women in political decision-making, and gender quotas have been implemented to address this need.”

and called on governments to “take measure to ensure women's equal access and full participation in power structures and decision-making” (Krook 2009, 3). The United Nations also incorporated this mission into its peace and security efforts in its Security Resolution 1325, which urges “all actors to increase the participation of women and incorporate gender perspectives in all United Nations peace and security efforts” (un.org). Other organizations have followed suit over the last ten years. The Socialist International, the Council of Europe, the European Union, the Commonwealth, the African Union, the Southern African Development Community, and the

Organization of American States have all issued declarations recommending a 30 percent goal for women's representation in political bodies (Krook 2009, 10).

The international community is increasingly recognizing the need to include more women in political decision-making, and gender quotas have been implemented to address this need. Quotas seem to be a response to the slow growth in women's representation because they represent the “fast track” to equal representation (Dahlerup and Friedenvall 2010). Quotas are a more direct method for improving women's representation as opposed to the ‘incremental track’ others advocate. While quotas reflect a number of posts that must be filled by women, the incremental track represents a commitment to improving women's opportunities in the public sphere through

education, labor laws, day-care centers, and active recruitment by political parties. There is one major benefit to the incremental track: it “ensures that elected women have some power base outside parliament” by helping to improve their standing throughout public life instead of simply focusing on numbers in parliament. Quotas, on the other hand, can turn women into tokens and leave them with no means of outside support if there is no simultaneous commitment to incremental measures (Dahlerup and Friedenvall 2010, 181). This choice in method therefore requires a “shift from one concept of equality to another”—in other words, abandoning a philosophy

of equality of opportunity for one of equality of results (Dahlerup and Friedenvall 2010, 175-177). This shift might present problems for countries like the United States, with a strongly engrained philosophy of the former.

While gender quotas are by no means a new international phenomenon, their rise in popularity has been relatively recent. Ten countries established quotas between 1930 and 1980; twelve other countries did so in the 1980s. In the 1990s, this trend accelerated, with the establishment of quotas in more than fifty countries and then forty more in the 2000s. Therefore, more than three-quarters of quotas policies have been instituted in the past fifteen years (Krook 2006, 312-313; 2009, 27). Today, half of the countries of the world use some type of quotas in their legislature. Interestingly, though, quotas are appearing in traditionally less progressive, less developed countries because the international community sees female empowerment as an important aspect of their economic development. The United Nations Development Programme's Arab Human Development Report in 2003 cited women's disempowerment as a main obstacle to human development in the region (Ballington and Dahlerup 2006, 254). So, while developing countries are pushed to increase the representation of their female citizens, more

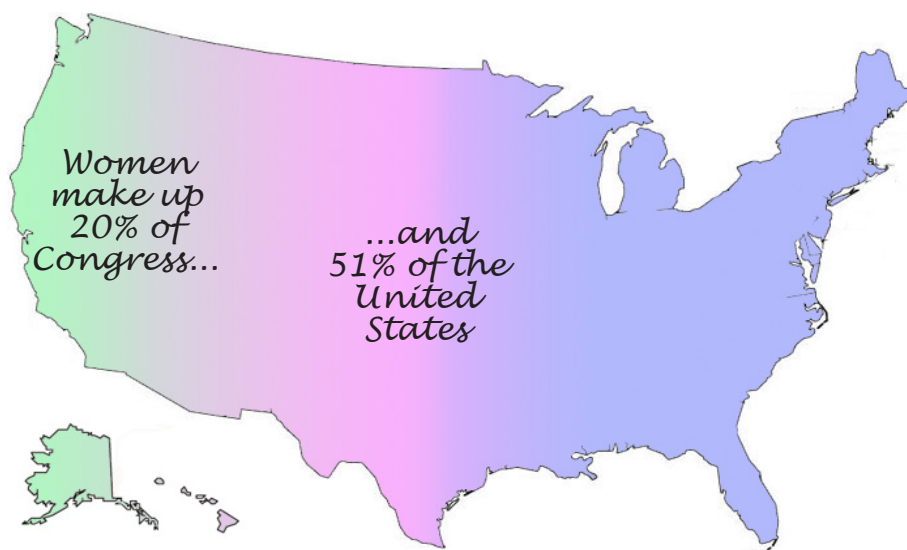
developed countries can largely ignore these demands (Krook 2009b, 25). This outcome is evident in the United States, where the debate over quotas has not entered the political scene even though other affirmative action policies have been adopted for racial groups. In Western Europe, quotas do exist but tend to be voluntarily implemented by parties (and therefore not enforced by the state). Countries with higher economic "rank," therefore, can be less concerned with issues of development, and their hegemony allows them to worry less about international pressures (Krook 2009b, 25-26).

The international push for gender quotas makes for an interesting dilemma: developing countries, some with long histories of institutionalized sexism, are beating more developed, historically democratic countries at their own game. The American 2012 election cycle increased the number of women entering both the House of Representatives and the Senate. Today, there are 97 women serving in the 113th Congress—20 in the Senate and 77 in the House, making the United States Congress almost a fifth female (Center for American Women and Politics). However, these advances toward more equal gender representation must be put in perspective—and not by simply lamenting that 18 percent of Congress is nowhere close to 51 percent of the

population. This issue also warrants a more global perspective. Countries around the world are responding to international pressures to increase the representativeness of their legislatures with the use of gender quotas. Rwanda has now surpassed many more traditionally liberal countries—with the help of gender quotas—as first in the world for women's representation, with over half of its legislative seats filled by women. Similarly, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iraq are higher on the list than the United States (ipu.org). While quotas do inherently present problems of tokenism and nominalism, there is no doubt they have potential to truly improve women's equality, especially if combined with more substantive measures. In the meantime, countries like the United States are relying on our tradition and promise of freedom and equality—one that has not always delivered in the past.

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GUNS AND BUTTER:

American Welfare and Defense Spending

ALISON SHANAHAN

When President Lyndon B. Johnson offered America the choice between fighting war and fighting poverty, he probably did not realize how polarizing his “guns or better” offer was. Every subsequent recession or sequester has brought guns and butter back into the political arena. Politicians bring personal ideologies and anecdotes to the argument, trying to argue for or against guns and butter on moral grounds. Despite all of the debate over where taxpayer money should be going, however, these two areas of spending are far more alike than they are different—and Congress would be best off seeking to maximize the efficiency of their spending in these two areas rather than arguing over which is more important to our economy.

Both welfare and defense spending are components of gross domestic product (GDP). If the economy is operating under full employment, as it does in recessionary gaps, an increase in either

lizes aggregate demand. In any event, data collected by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) shows a general trend of increasing welfare spending as a percentage of GDP, starting from a low in 1960 of about 7% (OECD 2012). Welfare spending peaked at about 25% in 2009 due to a combination of increased applicants for welfare and decreased GDP (Center on Budget and Policy Priorities 2012). Although economists still debate the effects of the 2009 economic stimulus package, the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities suggests that the welfare provisions kept at least six million people out of poverty and prevented a greater decrease in aggregate demand (Sherman 2012). Welfare spending will likely remain high until the country fully recovers from the 2008-2009 economic recession; as GDP increases, however, the number of potential applications should subsequently shrink and lead to a decline in welfare expenditures.

Defense spending shifts are not as

2011). After researchers controlled for the effects of wartime mobilization, data from 1948 to 1976 show large increases in defense spending in the first two years after an election and a subsequent decrease in the following two years. Researchers Nincic Miroslav and Thomas Cusack largely attribute the increases to the perceived political and economic benefits of stabilizing demand (Nincic 1979). More recent empirical evidence has demonstrated the importance of defense spending to economic growth. A report by the National Association of Manufacturers links decreases in defense spending to decreases in GDP, a troubling projection for a country like the United States that is already struggling to maintain growth rates (National Association of Manufacturers 2012).

Thus, both welfare and defense spending increase aggregate demand. Fiscal considerations aside, however, though the societal benefits of each type of spending differ considerably, both are plagued with some level of inefficiency.

“[Welfare and defense] spending are far more alike than they are different -- and Congress would be best off seeking to maximize the efficiency of their spending...rather than arguing over which is more important to our economy.”

category of spending should raise GDP. Thus, increases in welfare or defense spending both serve as economic stimuli. Regarding welfare, however, partisan politics are not the sole cause of the shifts in government spending. Welfare spending is often referred to as an “automatic stabilizer”—it naturally increases in recessions and decreases in expansions, and in doing so, stabi-

straightforward. In comparison to welfare spending, defense spending is a smaller part of GDP and has hovered between 4.4 and 4.8% of GDP over the last four years (World Bank 2013). As expected, defense spending increases in times of security crises. The specific determinants of defense spending are debatable, but there are notable political trends among administrations (Whitten

The benefits of welfare spending differ by program and depend on the structure of aid. About 91% of aid goes to working families, the disabled, or the elderly. An additional 7% goes towards unemployment benefits, medical care, Social Security benefits for those 62-64, and Social Security survivor benefits for spouses and children (Sherman February 2012). Additionally, programs for food aid such

as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) offer better nutrition for poor families, and each aid dollar generates as much as \$1.70 in additional economic activity (Rosenbaum 2013). Yet welfare spending can also be inefficient; Michael Tanner of the Cato Institute notes that welfare spending has expanded significantly since the mid-sixties, while poverty rates have consistently ranged from 10-15% over the same period (Tanner 2012). Some economists and politicians believe welfare decreases the incentives to work while others have proved that certain programs increase the



incentives to work and reduce welfare participation (Card 1996).

While the effects of welfare are often unclear, defense spending is easier to track. The U.S. Department of Defense is the nation's largest employer (U.S. Department of Defense 2013), and several American companies rely on its purchases. The National Association of Manufacturers is vehemently opposed to decreases in the defense budget, citing expected losses in the aerospace industry and others that will occur if the defense budget shrinks (National Association of Manufacturers 2012). Additionally, concerns about national security influence the debate over defense spending. Several Pentagon leaders, including Pentagon comptroller Robert F. Hale, think the current level of defense spending is necessary to maintain national readiness (Masters 2013). Despite the opinions of the

Pentagon, several economists and politicians do not believe the current level of defense spending is optimal. Economist Benjamin Zycher notes the demand for defense spending has decreased, and U.S. defense expenditures should subsequently fall. The potential for savings makes combing through specific issues of national security worthwhile, especially

pertaining to the possible surplus of military outlays. He also notes that some studies, such as the one conducted by the National Association of Manufacturers, use grossly inflated multipliers when they calculate the economic impact of defense spending. Furthermore, decreases in government demand would likely lead to the reallocation of resources and more private market demand for goods. Because of the reallocation, the job losses could be less severe than previous estimates suggest (Preble 2012).

Welfare and defense spending have individual flaws but they are less different from each other than politicians suggest. Both increase GDP, allowing private consumers and the Department of Defense to support aggregate demand. Socially, they each provide some shared benefits, such as increased income, and some unique ones, such as food to poor children and national security to the nation. However, neither is perfect and both need to be restructured for increased efficiency. In any case, the 1960s choice of guns or butter is a false one. If Congress

wants to maximize national resources, members should focus on optimizing the effects of welfare and defense spending rather than demonizing one and sanctifying the other.

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OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM: TEN YEARS LATER

AN INTERVIEW WITH KATHERINE CARROLL

MICHAEL ZOROB

First, Professor Carroll, how were you involved in the Iraq War?

I served in Iraq from April 2008 to April 2009 as a social, political, and cultural advisor in a program called the Human Terrain Systems Program, which embeds social scientists with military brigades in Iraq and Afghanistan.

What sort of things did you learn in that capacity?

[Laughs] What didn't I learn? In terms of Iraq, I learned about how the war was affecting Iraqis, how elections were being run, how the government was functioning, how the social system functioned – different tribes, cultural regions, the different institutions set up by the US government. In terms of the U.S. military, I went from 0 to 60 – I learned how the US military functioned, its structures, practices, norms, and cultures. I learned a ton; I learned ten years of information in one year.

Did you think that the U.S. military was incorporating this knowledge about Iraqi society into their efforts?

They were trying to when I was there. They started a little late in the game – pretty late in the game. But they certainly were trying when I was there. They would always try to consider what the U.S. military calls second and third order effects; if we do this, what will happen in terms of later cultural and political effects. So, for example, if the military goes into a place and arrests all the military aged males, who's going to get back at us? What tribes are in that place, who are they allied with, who are we going to hear from? They also

needed information in areas that are classically relevant to political scientists: how should elections be held, how are the formal structures of governments supposed to work and how do they actually work, things like that.

Looking back ten years later, what do you think are the biggest lessons of the Iraq War in terms of foreign policy?

Well the invasion, we all understand now, was not in American interests clearly and directly interpreted. And that is bad. We should not launch large scale military attacks unless they are really in the interests of national security. I do not think that a lesson from that is that we shouldn't launch large scale humanitarian interventions involving the military. I think that is appropriate. I also think it is appropriate to do what we did in Libya – to assist in these uprisings that we said we support. So I think the lesson about that was the use of massive ground forces to achieve foreign policy goals and that it had better be clear what we were trying to do and that we need to do it.

What sort of mistakes, if any, do you think the Bush Administration made that resulted in our going to Iraq in what may not have been in our strategic interests?

I think their mistake was to act based on fear and the absence of information, which is somewhat understandable in the post-9/11 and especially the post-Anthrax environment. They didn't know what they didn't know, and they were frightened. I haven't seen any evidence suggesting they were interested in oil or anything else. I think it was a genuine type fear that something could happen – that anything could happen. But

there's no way to craft rational foreign policy that responds to this sort of premise that anything could happen at any time. I think that was a mistake. Of course their major mistake was to mislead the American people about it, and then, having done so, the American people, Congress, and the media not trying harder to stop them, though I don't know whether or not that would have been possible.

By misleading the American people, are you referring to events like Colin Powell going before the UN and saying Iraq had weapons of mass destruction?

He asserts he was himself misled. But yes, making statements suggesting we knew with certainty that there were weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. There were chemical weapons in Iraq and there were dangerous things that were in Iraq. But those things weren't going to be used against us by Saddam Hussein and they weren't going to be handed over to Al Qaeda.

All that said, I think that getting rid of Saddam Hussein was an admirable goal - had that been our goal. In fact, I'm one of those people who believe that it could have been possible for us to conduct this war in a less damaging way and that the ultimate goal of freeing the Iraqi from Saddam Hussein was a good one. But that wasn't our goal. That's an unpopular position, but I believe that to be true and I believe that, as much as they hated the way we conducted the war, that many Iraqis also believed that to be true. And they did welcome us as liberators. That was going to have a short shelf-life, and we exacerbated that short shelf-life of our welcome through acts which alienated them from us.

Which acts, specifically?

Well, we simply did not secure Baghdad. We allowed it to be lawless. We allowed there to be looting. We allowed militias to get up and running that intimidated people. We allowed people to come in to power politically who then used those positions of power to develop mechanisms of violence to use against other people. We didn't take the steps that we should have taken to make the Iraqis secure, to give them the space that they needed to get their political lives back under way. In particular, in 2006-2007, I think it would have been difficult to secure the population at that time, but this sort of debacle with militias running around killing people because they were Sunni or Shia depending on the sectarian composition of the militia, that didn't have to be as bad as it was. And that is a great shame.

Do you think that De-Ba'athification [the US-sponsored policy by the Iraqi Provisional Government to rid the Iraqi government of all traces of Sadaam Hussein supporters] was also a result of that ambiguity?

Well, I think that De-Ba'athification was a mistake in its implementation. It was probably something of a mistake in its idea but certainly some of the members of the Ba'ath Party had to go. We wanted the Iraqis to be in charge of that but the problem is we put it in the hands of the wrong Iraqis who used that as a rationale to go after not just their political enemies but also certain economic assets. It was a mistake. Iraqis probably would have benefited from some sort of early truth and reconciliation commission - not that people wouldn't have lied to that - but that could have been handled better. De-Ba'athification should not have gone as deeply, and we should have maintained

greater control and oversight over that process, which would have involved greater investment and time and energy, and not shifting sovereignty back to the Iraqis themselves so early, which I think many Iraqis did not want.

I can't tell you how many Iraqis said to me: "when you first came here, we were so happy because we thought 'finally, we'll get to be Japan, we'll get to be Germany.'" But we didn't have the stomach for taking on another Japan or Germany. And we didn't feel comfortable exercising control over a conquered people for such a long time; the Iraqis hadn't done much to us unlike Japan or Germany. So they were hoping to become the next Japan or Germany- obviously that was going to be a stretch no matter what -



Carroll met with sheiks to learn about the political and cultural environment.

and yet that sort of intense effort and that willingness to say we're going to do this and it's not going to look good, though the international community would have objected, I actually think it would have been better in the medium term.

Looking back 10 years later, do you think Iraq is better off because the U.S. invaded?

I am torn on that issue. I don't think there's any way you can have 100,000 civilian deaths and say people are better off. That price is too high, and every Iraqi family is affected by those deaths. And they came on a wave of death

caused by the Iran-Iraq War in the 1980s, sanctions in the 1990s ... So the Iraqi people are permanently in mourning. I think that getting rid of Saddam Hussein was a great thing; he was a terrible man, terrible to his own people. But it would have been a good thing if we didn't allow that many deaths to occur. By the way these deaths did not occur during the invasion. They weren't predominantly caused by direct contact with Iraqi civilians. They were mostly Iraqis on Iraqis.

So I just keep coming back to this. Had we done it right, it could have been a good thing. Could we have done it right? I guess none of us knew about the capacities or lack of capacities of the U.S. military to know. Overall, I have

to say, when that many people die, it's not good. Iraqis always say that before they had one Saddam, now they have fifty. They had found a way to deal with that political system as perverse and brutal as it was. But now they are at sea and can't figure out how to protect themselves from these new forms of authoritarianism. They feel themselves to be not as well off. But many Iraqis love the new system and are much happier, and they'll tell you that.

What are the prospects for the future of Iraq?

It does not look good right now. People are being thrown in jail for no reason, predominantly along sectarian lines. The last election was essentially stolen from the winner. There's this sort of lawlessness where if you pop up on somebody's radar for the wrong reason, they'll kill you or threaten you. Things do not look good right now. But I don't think Iraq is going to go back to that sort of iron fisted authoritarianism that you found before. I think the Iraqis have suffered too much, and they have too much invested to allow that sort of authoritarianism to take root. So that there will be for the foreseeable future



Carroll, in military uniform, meets with Iraqi children.

elections, and these elections may be ridden with have fraud, but that notion that democracy is a part of life in Iraq will not go away. And that gives some hope for the future. And there is certainly more freedoms of expression and movement that are significant. But there's also this sort of insecurity and sense of threat that are going on in Iraq and that we don't seem to have the leverage over the Iraqi government to stop it. And I think that's one of our great mistakes. Whatever leverage we might have developed to stop the Iraqi government from throwing people in jail unfairly, we didn't use it. And we might have failed if we tried to use it, but I don't have any evidence that we ever tried to use it.

What about the effect on U.S. image?

Well nothing could be worse for U.S. image than the Abu Gharib scandal – and the rest of the war too. This is a war that is seen in the Arab World as a war of domination a war of cultural clashes and lack of respect. It was different on the ground when I was there. There were certainly terrible problems in the beginning and there were always terrible problems, but you have a huge group of

American soldiers now who understand the Arab-Muslim World much better; some soldiers went to Iraq three times, they spent years in Iraq, they learned a lot about it, and the Iraqis learned a lot about them. So I think there are many Iraqis who will say, “Oh the Americans are awful, but I just love Captain So-and-so. He was great. If only all Americans were like him.” Or I think many Iraqis would say of Americans that their hearts are in the right place now but they question why America was so awful before and why they don't accomplish more. Many Iraqis wonder why if America doesn't want Iraqis to be thrown in jail unfairly they still are being thrown in jail unfairly or why there seemed to be so much chaos under American watch. Iraqis would say, “You're America; can't you do something about that?”

I had many people say to me in Iraq: “We try to tell people in other countries that we actually get along pretty well with American soldiers now, but they don't believe us because your image is terrible. And yet we're sitting here having lunch or tea with you. You were awful to some people and some of you are really bad, but we really like a lot

of you. We don't want you here, but we consider you a friend.”

So it was absolutely damaging to our image throughout the Arab-Muslim World and beyond – the stories and the images and facts about how we behaved in Iraq. But the Iraqis, mad at us as they are as a group, are today much more knowledgeable and more comfortable with Americans than they were at the beginning of the war. And that is good. They understand us better. And that will make them savvier in their dealings with us.

So do you think we have some sort of partner in Iraq?

I think we have a partner in the Iraqi people, not that we have extended much of a hand to them. We didn't give visas to the Iraqis who helped us, we have not established exchange programs for students, professors, things like that in any way comparable to what that society would need and deserve given our interactions with them. These are relatively low-cost things we could do for Iraqis - cooperation of all kind in terms of society to society - We're poised to do that because we understand them and we have these established relationships with them but there doesn't seem to be much of a push for that right now.

In terms of the state of Iraq right now, I don't think so. The state of Iraq is not our ally. They are caught between the Arab Spring and Iran, and they are concerned with their own crises and problems. So they're polite to us when we visit I have no doubt, but I just don't think that right now they are a state we can rely on for any sort of assistance; they have their own interests and they are often interests that we don't support.

Related to that, do you believe Iran stronger because we got rid of Saddam Hussein?

Yes, I do. But a lot of other things are going on at the same time too. Saddam Hussein's departure meant a lot of good things for Iran. In particular, it meant they had a lot of business opportunities in Iraq – massive business opportunities to take advantage of – contacts, things like that. It meant that they could let

their guard down about that side of their country and that allowed them to focus their energies elsewhere to a certain extent. Overall, it is better for them for Saddam Hussein to be gone.

This confuses Iraqis a lot; they would always ask, "Iran is your enemy. But you gave Iraq to Iran when you got rid of Saddam Hussein. Why did you do that? We don't understand." So that was good for Iran, but Iran is dealing with a lot of other things right now, from sanctions to the loss of their only ally in the region, Bashar Al-Assad. They're in trouble for other reasons, which probably means they'll focus more on tightening their control over Iraq, to develop that relationship. It's hard to follow what Iran does in Iraq because so much is through personal ties and it's quiet, but it's there: Iran is everywhere in Iraq.

Did the U.S. try to implement the lessons from Iraq in Afghanistan?

We tried to, but, in my opinion Afghanistan is a different environment, and they didn't work as well. Mostly it [Afghanistan] is spread out, there's not much of a sense of nationalism. It's hard to secure people and protect people from the Taliban and get them in line with the central government when they don't see themselves as part of that government, and we can't be there. In Baghdad, we could be there; when I was there, we were there. We were living in the neighborhoods, meeting with people every day, we were everywhere. We probably should have kept that up for a little bit longer, but I don't think we achieved that in Afghanistan – maybe in certain areas for short periods of time but that's all. So I think it was really different and we tried to implement the lessons of Iraq in Afghanistan, but they failed to operate in the same way there because Afghanistan is different from Iraq in very important ways.

Finally, Professor Carroll, how will history see the War in Iraq?

History is speaking right now, and history is saying – history has said – this was a bad idea to start with. And you made a bunch of mistakes and you spent

too much money and it was just a mess. It was always a mess in some way; the year I was there was the year that it finally came together – we worked closely with the international community, it was relatively peaceful, there were relatively free elections in January of 2009. So I think that history will see it as a mistake.

That certainly doesn't mean that there weren't some good things because of it. The war made some Iraqis more free; people in Najaf, Karbala - they've got problems, but they're happier and freer because we got rid of Saddam Hussein. I had a woman say to me, I was in jail for years, sent to exile in Iran, I couldn't see my family ... When you came in 2003, not only was I able to return home, but you helped me, I participated in American training programs and got a job. There are cases like that all over Iraq. When you weigh it out, though, I think history will always be hard on us.

The war has encouraged a reconciliation of American military and society in a way because we didn't hold the military responsible for a lot of the mistakes that were made in terms of going in prematurely and not having enough troops, and it kind of sealed a breach between the public and the military that

emerged from Vietnam. I also think the military learned a lot about its capacity and came out of the war stronger and smarter than before.

The war also revived the public sense of responsibility to oversee our government's use of military force. The public has a revived sense that we have that responsibility, which we do – and that's good. It will wear out, eventually, and we'll forget. But for a time we feel that responsibility because of Iraq.

Sometimes we take it too far. I think we should have intervened in Syria. I think that one of the lessons from the War in Iraq is that you don't let people kill each other if you are hoping that the state that emerges will be democratic and peaceful – that you should intervene to stop the killing even if that means getting into the conflict or to some extent putting Americans in danger. But it is in our interests to stop those mass killings from happening – not just because it means that people like Al Qaeda tend to get the upper hand on the ground, though that's also true.

In short, I think that history will be hard on us because of Iraq. But that doesn't mean it was all bad.

Interview conducted 3/28/2013



The professor with her interpreter, Maha El Sadder, at a political rally.

THE POLITICS OF REBRANDING

Can the GOP Win Over the Latino Vote?

The Republican Party is strategizing to broaden its appeal to more voters

CHRISTOPHER JERROLD

The Republican Party effectively sold their message to one demographic in the 2012 presidential election: white men. Governor Romney lost the women's vote by eleven points, the youth vote by twenty-four points, the Latino vote by forty-four points, and the African-American vote by eighty-seven points (CNN 2012). After seeing these voters struggle to identify with Romney's message, the GOP immediately began to search for ways to rebrand the party and to gain back some of the ground that it lost in the last two presidential elections.

In 2012, Latinos appeared to be the most highly sought after minority. With such large populations in the swing states of Florida, New Mexico, Colorado, and Nevada, Latinos are gaining a stronger voice in the U.S. political arena. Appropriately, the GOP has apparently recognized the growing strategic importance of the Latino vote. Since the election, members of the Republican Party have continuously stated that this is a group of voters that share many of the same core principles as the grand old party. Republicans believe they can connect with Latinos on issues pertaining to religion, family, and the economy more

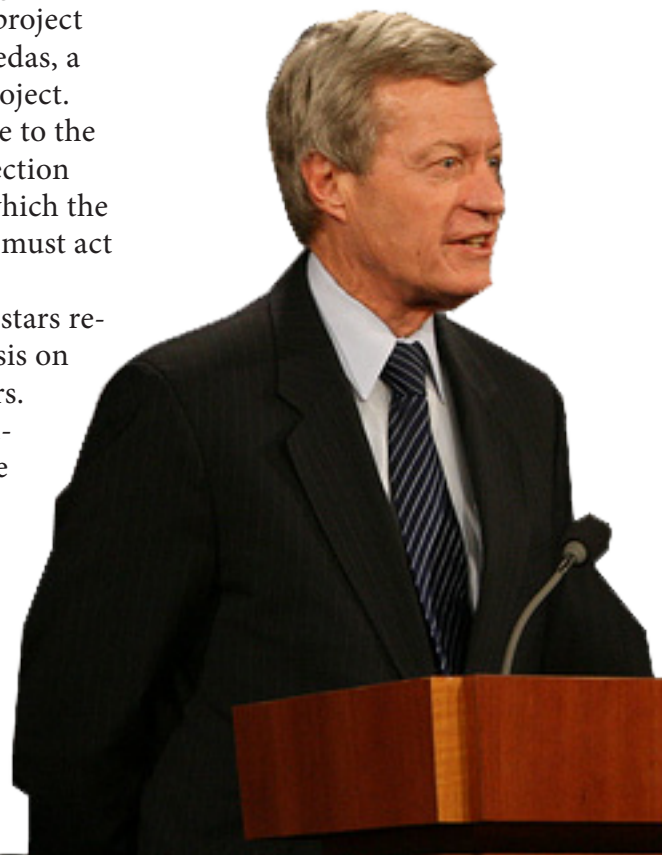
effectively than Democrats. Additionally, the party has redirected its immigration stance and its efforts to attract the Latino vote through a number of different measures.

Immediately after the 2012 election, the Republican National Committee started a "Growth and Opportunity Project" in order to "grow [the] party and win more elections" (Priebus 2012). Chairman of the RNC, Reince Priebus, said, "We are going to take risks, make changes, talk to people we haven't before, and go places we haven't been in a long time" (Priebus 2012). The project has taken overt measures to appeal to Latinos, such as including Spanish text within parts of the project and appointing Zori Fonalledas, a Puerto Rican, to lead the project. This fast and major response to the lessons learned from the election loss shows the urgency in which the Republican Party feels they must act before the 2016 election.

Some of the GOP's rising stars reflect the party's new emphasis on reaching out to Latino voters. Many believe that U.S. Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL), the son of Cuban immigrants and a Tea Party favorite, is the answer to the GOP's minority problem. Rubio, now presumed to be a front-runner for the 2016 GOP presidential nomination, was on Governor Romney's shortlist for Vice President in 2012.

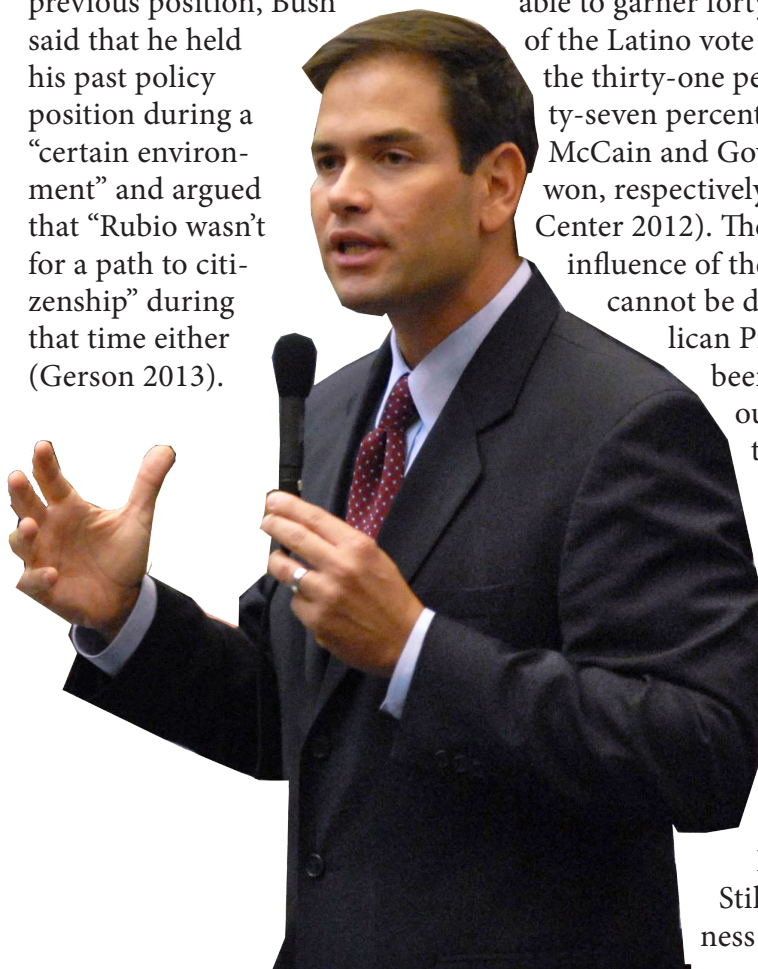
Although U.S. Representative Paul Ryan (R-WI) was eventually selected, Rubio has remained in the limelight with television appearances and fiery Senate floor rhetoric. Most notably, Rubio delivered in English and Spanish the Republican response to President Obama's State of the Union.

Perhaps where Senator Rubio has the most credibility and visibility is the current immigration debate. In 2012, Rubio proposed his own version of the DREAM Act in the Senate, and although it also failed, many Latinos applauded his effort for stepping outside of the



traditional Republican immigration position. Furthermore, he is a crucial member within the Senate's Gang of Eight -- a bipartisan coalition working to propose immigration reform legislation. Although influential Senators John McCain (R-AZ) and Lindsay Graham (R-SC) are also part of the coalition, Rubio has been touted as the key to the plan's success.

Former Florida Governor Jeb Bush is another GOP darling who is emerging into the spotlight. Bush, another possible 2016 GOP presidential candidate, has increased Latino outreach while campaigning in the Sunshine State. Bush has retracted his tough immigration stance and sided with other Republicans, like Rubio, who are embracing a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants. In defending his previous position, Bush said that he held his past policy position during a "certain environment" and argued that "Rubio wasn't for a path to citizenship" during that time either (Gerson 2013).



Prominent Republican support for a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants is a stark policy shift in a relatively short period of time. During the

"However, with the uncertain future of comprehensive immigration reform, the GOP could further damage their relationship with Latinos if the old party line stands in the way of reform."

2012 Republican primary debates, Romney called for the government to make it so difficult for undocumented immigrants to find work that they would "self-deport" (CBS News 2013).

Furthermore, the Bush name is losing its stigma; in fact, Jeb Bush could learn from his brother's campaign strategies. In 2004, President George W. Bush was able to garner forty-four percent of the Latino vote as opposed to the thirty-one percent and twenty-seven percent that Senator McCain and Governor Romney won, respectively (Pew Hispanic Center 2012). The impact and influence of the Bush dynasty cannot be denied; a Republican President has not

been elected without a Bush on the ticket since 1972. Returning to what worked in the past instead of looking for something new may be the GOP's answer for collecting the Latino vote.

Still, the effectiveness of the GOP's

efforts to rebrand its party and attract Latinos may not be conclusive until the votes are tallied in 2016. If Senator Rubio is able to maintain his popularity within the

party and is on the next presidential ticket, Republicans have the potential to regain some of the Latino vote. Likewise, Governor Jeb Bush could be a strong candidate in 2016, as he was the governor of a heavily Latino populated swing state and is from a family of proven leadership. However, with the uncertain future of comprehensive immigration reform, the GOP could further damage their relationship with Latinos if the old party line stands in the way of reform.

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RAISING THE BAR: Minimum Wage in America

A comparative analysis on whether raising the minimum wage would harm employment rates

KEVIN SCHOELZEL

In the first State of the Union of his second term, President Barack Obama outlined a number of policies he intends to implement over the remainder of his presidency. Among his top priorities was to raise the minimum wage from \$7.25 to \$9.00 an hour and index it to inflation. While many people support the notion of fair pay, the economics of minimum wage have always been contentious; advocates and opponents point to different economic studies and principles to defend their beliefs on the issue. This article seeks to explore the arguments put forth by both sides to and analyze the repercussions of raising or maintaining the current level of minimum wage. To enact effective policy, politicians need to weigh the political and eco-

conomic dimensions of this problem, and make the trade offs between good policy and popular politics. Ultimately, the discussion of raising the minimum wage is more politically expedient than economically certain.

A Case Against Raising the Minimum Wage: Introductory Economics

Despite its political and social unpopularity, there is a very sound economic argument against raising the minimum wage. From an economic perspective, wages represent the equilibrium price at which the labor demanded in the market is equivalent to the labor being supplied in the market. Minimum wage, however, acts as a price floor. Enacting a minimum wage increases the amount of money workers are paid, despite the fact that the overall market for labor has not changed. Without some other factor enabling employers to hire more workers, however, businesses will simply hire fewer laborers at this higher wage level. Thus, workers who are employed make more money, but at the same time, fewer people have jobs than

otherwise would if no minimum wage law was in place.

This economic reasoning has

been confirmed by empirical research; in a study conducted by Professor Jonathan Meer and graduate student Jeremy West at Texas A&M University argued that raising the minimum wage “reduces gross hiring of new employees, but that there is no effect on gross separations. Moreover, despite having an insignificant discrete effect on the employment level, increases in the legal wage floor directly reduce job growth” (2012). Their study goes on to show that for every 10% raise in the minimum wage, long term growth decreases 0.35%, “In other words, on average, about one-sixth fewer jobs are created on net for each 10% increase to the minimum wage (Meer & West 2012, 14).

Opponents of the president’s proposal point to this logic to argue that an increase in minimum wage would be detrimental to the economy as a whole, especially given that America is already in a prolonged jobs crisis; according to a March 8, 2013 report from the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, the unemployment rate is currently 7.7% (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2013).

To make matters worse, these potential negative effects of raising the minimum wage are likely to affect individuals already suffering from the highest levels of unemployment. Currently, 3.4 million of the 135 million employed in the U.S. are paid at minimum wage (USA Today 2013). A majority of these minimum wage workers, however, are teenagers, part-time workers, and minorities; for all three of these groups,



President Obama announced the policy proposal in his 2013 State of the Union address:

“Tonight, let’s declare that, in the wealthiest nation on Earth, no one who works full time should have to live in poverty -- and raise the federal minimum wage to \$9 an hour.”

unemployment is higher than the national average – for example, 25.1% amongst teenagers (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2013).

A Case for Raising the Minimum Wage: A More Nuanced Picture

Despite the intuitiveness of such arguments, however, proponents of raising the minimum wage often cite empirical research that seems to contradict this logic. Economists David Card and Alan Krueger (1993) conducted a famous study on minimum wage comparing the fast-food industries of Pennsylvania and New Jersey after New Jersey increased its minimum wage from \$4.25 to \$5.05 per hour. After evaluating 410 different fast-food restaurants in the two states, Card and Krueger found that employment in New Jersey increased by 13% -- thus contradicting the common economic arguments put forward against minimum wage legislation (Card & Krueger 1993).

Even beyond this study, however, there are a number of economic principles that suggest raising the minimum wage to be beneficial; in a recent op-ed for the New York Times, Christina Romer, a professor of economics at the University of California-Berkeley and a former economic advisor to President Obama, discussed the president’s proposed minimum-wage policy. She noted that higher wages tend to reduce worker turnover, which in turn boosts productivity and raises

the demand for workers (Romer, 2013). Romer also noted that employers might successfully offset higher wage prices by pushing the additional costs onto customers without reducing their hiring. However, if firms are already profit maximizing, and without some additional boost to demand, the rise in prices may drive customers away.

Economic Uncertainty and Enacting Effective Policy

Few people would debate the admirable social justification of raising the minimum wage. However, in a time of such widespread unemployment and economic instability, it is uncertain that raising the minimum wage will significantly override, and indeed contradict, the classic economic principles of supply and demand. To what extent factors like productivity and turnover counteract natural economic forces is the center of the debate. Economics does not happen in a vacuum; even if the repercussions of a wage level policy do not directly affect the labor market, it will have consequences. As Romer alluded to in her argument, someone, somewhere, needs to pay for the higher wages: be it an employer, a customer, or un-hired new employee.

While many studies (Romer 2013; Card & Krueger 1993) have shown the negligible effects on employment for those already employed, they also acknowledge that the area most affected is hiring (West & Meer 2012).

Each month, more people are trying to enter the workforce. Raising the minimum wage will raise the barrier to these people getting new jobs and perpetuate the jobs crisis.

The best time to raise wages is when there is economic growth or when some other powerful external economic forces compel the markets to hire more workers and create competitive forces on employers to raise wages. The administration should focus its efforts on enacting policy that enables this economic growth and that creates sustainable long-term prosperity. It is still admirable to have a price floor for wages, but to raise this floor at this time seems more politically than economically motivated.

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PHARMACEUTICAL REGULATION IN A POST-VIAGRA MARKET

Efforts to conform to international regulations create challenges for U.S. legislators

NOAH FRAM

During the 1990s, researchers at a Pfizer laboratory in Sandwich, Kent (famed for its poker-playing Earl) synthesized a compound which they believed would treat hypertension and angina pectoris, both potentially fatal diseases of the circulatory system. The drug went into clinical trial, and the administering doctors discovered an interesting phenomenon: nobody wanted to return their leftovers. Since hypertension treatments are not normally recreational drugs, as the high they produce is marginal at best, this was admittedly puzzling until they discovered a few

notable side effects. The compound was repackaged, patented in 1996, and approved for sale in its new incarnation in 1998, becoming the first oral medication for its disorder rubber-stamped by the FDA (Vogel 1998). It could even be credited with starting the deregulation snowball of the last two decades (Harvard 2009).

This medication, of course, is Viagra, now known primarily through commercials showing middle-aged and older actors abandoning productivity in favor of more entertaining pursuits.

Mostly, the Viagra story gains attention because of its status as the first highly visible drug marketed strictly to alleviate a condition which for most of history was not seen as an illness. This phenomenon, known as medicalization, has raised the ire of many pundits and journalists (including the Executive Editor of Reuters Health, Dr. Ivan Oransky). However, Viagra is

possibly more significant in a completely different way: it was also the first medication to be marketed directly to consumers, and so was the most visible result of the contentious and sometimes paralyzing

"As the medical industry becomes more global, regulators have been forced to homogenize their standards, resulting in an evening of the playing field."

deregulation movement that has swept the United States (Gaglani 2012).

Deregulation is a major component of the current Republican platform, the Conservative Party in the United Kingdom, and analogous parties throughout Europe. However, only in the United States has this policy been consistently enacted over the last two decades; for instance, from when Tony Blair and the Labour party took power in the 1990s up to the recent Conservative coalition victory (in 2006), the UK had trended steadily towards restoring their regulatory framework which Margaret Thatcher had gutted in the 1980s. This process is only very recently being reversed. The United States government is beginning to move the opposite direction but still does not moni-



tor industries such as transportation and automobile production (particularly with mileage standards) as strictly as do other countries (Lynch, Vogel 2001).

Even more telling, the rest of the developed world appears to be following the Labour blueprint much more closely than the Conservative one. Between 1992 and 2004, the frequency of economic regulatory practices aimed at pharmaceutical companies increased amongst member countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). These regulations tended to be more common in countries that already possessed established regulatory systems, which includes almost every OECD member (except the United States, of course). This indicates that the existence of some regulations encourages governments to add more. But this is far from the only trend at play.

Recently, organizations such as the FDA have begun to cooperate with their foreign counterparts. As the medical industry becomes more global, regulators have been forced to homogenize their standards, resulting in an evening of the playing field. It also appears to have improved the efficiency of the regulatory machine, resulting in greater collaboration among different countries' industries. However, while this homogenization does point to the United States moving closer to the OECD norm of increasing pharmaceutical regulation, it says very little about the overall political climate.

These efforts have only been exacerbated by the increasingly contentious split between the Democratic and Republican factions. Neither side is willing to give ground, so regardless of public opinion (which

The little blue pill with big consequences:



"[Viagra] was... the first medication to be marketed directly to consumers, and so was the most visible result of the contentious and sometimes paralyzing deregulation movement that has swept the United States"

most polls say favors increased regulation and enforcement of current laws) very little is likely to change particularly soon (Polling Report 2013). Parliamentary politics does not work in a non-parliamentary system, it turns out. Recent trends within regulatory agencies notwithstanding, it seems that the federal government itself is not shifting its focus to better match the EU and OECD priorities particularly quickly at all. Rather, it is simply failing to do much of anything (Sparrow 2012).

As a result, regulatory policy is almost entirely out of the hands of the elected government. Due to legislative gridlock and Congressional inability to pass guidelines for new FDA policies with any certainty, the general population has almost no control. Parliamentary strategy has sapped the democracy of this country, in the realm of medical regulation at least, and if recent political trends are any indication, things will not be returning to normal anytime soon.

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OBAMA'S PRESCHOOL PROPOSAL

Is Obama's plan the answer to the U.S. education crisis?

ALAK MEHTA

In his 2013 State of the Union address, President Obama proposed “working with states to make high-quality preschool available to every child in America,” stating that “lack of access to preschool education can shadow [poor kids] the rest of their lives” (Farley 2013). While liberals generally support the idea, the plan was immediately met with criticism from conservatives for being cost-ineffective, rooted in nebulous evidence, and a superfluous addition to existing preschool programs like Head Start, a comprehensive early childhood program for low-income families that includes health care, nutrition, and parent outreach. Though President Obama’s proposal is not without its flaws, a more universal pre-K education should be

welcomed as a way to reduce the achievement gap, equalize opportunity for all, and in the long run, boost the American economy.

The key question in this debate is whether investment in preschool will lead to long-term economic and social gains. Obama, in the State of the Union, claimed, “every dollar we invest in high-quality early education can save more than seven dollars later on—by boosting graduation rates, reducing teen pregnancy, and even reducing violent crime” (Economist, 2013). Empirical data on the effects of preschool education, however, are less clear – or at the very least, more complex – than President Obama seems to suggest. As one example, the very study President Obama cites also included extensive parent training and social services (LA Times, 2013). Moreover, another study analyzing

Head Start showed “initial positive effects,” from the program but noted that the impact largely faded by the end of 3rd grade. Nonetheless, as Obama correctly points out, in states that offer universal preschool education, like Georgia and Oklahoma,

“...a more universal pre-K education should be welcomed as a way to reduce the achievement gap...”

students are more likely to read and do math at grade level, graduate from high school, and hold a job (Farley 2013). Moreover, the HighScope program completed a telling study tracking at-risk students for forty years after being randomly placed either in a high-quality preschool or no preschool.

The results showed that adults who had completed the preschool program had higher earnings, had committed fewer crimes, and were more likely to graduate from high school. (HighScope, 2005)

Despite the success of such preschool programs, there are still disagreements in academia about the long-term benefits of preschool due to a lack of valid long-term studies (Whitehurst, 2013). As a result, questions persist about whether increased preschool education will amount to wasteful spending or provide relief for a multitude of economic and social ills. However, evidence seems to indicate that the



potential benefits of the Obama proposal will outweigh the risks.

The preschool plan, according to the White House, will be targeted to lower-income children from families at or below 200% of the poverty line. This targeted approach will reduce costs and dedicate valuable money to the

proposed preschool plan may help reduce this gap between low- and upper- income families and between races, thus equalizing opportunity for everyone. Moreover, increased preschool education will develop children's interest in learning; it only takes a few engaging, educational activities in preschool

tion of perhaps a slightly-increased scope (Farley 2013). The Obama administration should consider synthesizing these various programs into one blanket initiative that provides block grants to state governments.

Despite its imperfections, the Obama preschool plan is a step

"Every dollar we invest in high-quality early education can save more than seven dollars later on-by boosting graduation rates, reducing teen pregnancy, and even reducing violent crime."

children who are at greatest risk of failing academically. And although the Obama administration's proposed rigorous curriculum standards might interfere with states' control of education, it will ensure that preschoolers develop the skills necessary for later academic success, such as a strong vocabulary and comfort with numbers. Research shows that children from low-income families are far behind their peers on these skills in Kindergarten, perpetuating a continually-increasing achievement gap that persists until adulthood (Whitehurst 2013). The

to spark a child's lifelong interest in education. Finally, the Obama proposal will include various data and assessment systems in order to determine the most successful types of classroom interactions and environments (Whitehurst 2013).

A major drawback to the proposal is its lack of integration with other government preschool programs, such as Head Start and the Child Care and Development Fund, which could lead to some funding overlap. It is not yet clear how Obama hopes to differentiate his plans from these currently existing programs, with the excep-

in the right direction. It will help reduce the gap in school readiness and the consequent divergence in academic achievement, creating a more level playing field regardless of family income. Due to its targeted nature, the program will yield a positive return on investment, and at the very least, the plan's data assessment provisions will improve our knowledge about effective educational strategies. Universal, high-quality preschool education should be a top priority for the Obama administration. We need to maximize human potential in order to keep America competitive in a global economy that is increasingly being dominated by countries with strong education systems.



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BASKETBALL DIPLOMACY

in the New North Korea

 BROOKS CAIN

Stories about international politics do not usually start with the name Dennis Rodman or mention any of the Harlem Globetrotters, but recent reports out of North Korea follow the example of their subject: bizarre. Recently, Dennis Rodman and a few of the Harlem Globetrotters went on a “basketball diplomacy” trip to Pyongyang – a trip that has made Kim Jong Un and Dennis Rodman “best friends for life” (Cnn.com 2013). Despite these antics and the regime’s new leader, the international community continues to see North Korea as a nuclear-armed country that poses a threat to the usual geopolitical power structure. With further examination of the country’s history, modus operandi, and capabilities, it is clear that North Korea is a country focused on itself, and fostering a sense of fear and uncertainty, rather than the destruction of South Korea and the United States.

Any discussion of the threat North Korea poses to the United States must appreciate the historical context of the past two decades. Widespread famine killed thousands of North Koreans in the 90s, and the country was forced to search for aid beyond conventional allies, especially since the Soviet Union, its historical sponsor, had collapsed. In 1996, Pyongyang agreed to four party talks between North and

South Korea, China, and the United States only when food aid was guaranteed for North Korea; the talks resulted in no substantive results (Kim 2003, 18).

North Korea’s provocations during the 2000s led the regime to be known as one of the most threatening to Western society. President George W. Bush famously referred to North Korea as part of a new “axis of evil” in his 2002 State of the Union address (Kim 2003, 7). In 2006, North Korea conducted its first nuclear weapons test against the wishes of the international community (Kiener 2011, 323).

Though North Korea has adopted a nonsensically threatening posture towards the United States and its allies, there is a method to the madness. Recent provocations by North Korea must be viewed in the context of the regime’s modus operandi. These actions are a predictable assertion of force by a leader demanding food aid without asking for it and searching for a means of self-reliance (Kim 2003, 12). Like North Korea’s empty threats in the past, the regime’s goal is to cultivate a sense of fear and unpredictability to leverage greater negotiating power overseas.

Furthermore, whenever power shifts to a new heir in North Korea, the leader typically legitimizes himself through a show of force. When a young Kim Jong Il was promoted up the political ladder in 1980, he was described as an “idiot” and a “playboy” (Kiener 2011, 338). In order to prove his value, Kim Jong Il was

tasked with planning attacks against South Korea, culminating in the 1983 assassination attempt of the South Korean President and the 1987 bombing of a South Korean airliner that left over a hundred South Koreans dead (Kiener 2011, 338). The 2010 attacks against South Korea, likely represent Un’s own attempts to legitimize himself at home and leverage himself abroad.

By looking at North Korea’s recent actions through an historical context and transitional precedents, the threat of North Korea is revealed for what it is: a ploy for international assistance. Though they may be used as a ploy, the regime still has nuclear capabilities, a fierce military, and a general disregard for human life. These characteristics make North Korea more dangerous than nearly any country in the world. However, the country’s most serious provocations are driven by bravado of new leaders, and the nuclear program is years from being a real threat. Instead, nuclear warheads are a tool to ensure self-reliance and a bargaining chip for international aid. Ultimately, North Korea’s actions are motivated by a keen desire for self-preservation. Kim Jong Un may be a dictator, but he is not an idiot. He knows that the survival of his country depends upon being feared enough to warrant aid, but not frightening enough to provoke a preemptive strike. Like a preteen boy, North Korea is loud enough to be annoying, strong enough to be a nuisance, and the good part of a decade away from being a real threat.

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THE GLOBAL ADVANCE OF Gay Marriage

— HANNAH GODFREY

In recent years, lawmakers in several countries -- such as France, the United Kingdom, and the United States -- have passed measures to advance the rights of gay couples to legally marry. In February, the French Parliament approved a bill redefining marriage as an agreement between two people rather than exclusively between a man and a woman. Just days later, the British House of Commons passed a bill opening the way for gay couples to officially marry in 2015. British law already allows civil partnerships between same-sex couples which include the same equal rights afforded to heterosexual married couples. The new laws in Britain and France represent the growing global trend toward a more inclusive definition of marriage that will potentially redefine the relationship between homosexuality and government policy.

Since 2000 when gay marriage was illegal around the world, 11 countries have legalized same-sex marriage. Gay marriage is now legal in 8 European nations, Argentina, South Africa, and Canada. Although the recent bills in France and the UK were not without opposition, it seems attitudes towards gay marriage are changing rapidly. According to a recent Populus poll, 65% of British adults now support gay marriage, up from 61% in 2009. The picture is similar across the Atlantic, where a majority of Americans -- 54 %, according to a February 2013 Gallup poll -- now support the right of gays and lesbians to marry. Legislative support for gay marriage is also on the rise in the U.S.; Maine, Maryland, and Washington all voted in favor of gay

marriage during the 2012 election cycle. Importantly, President Obama made history earlier this year when he became the first president to publically support gay marriage or to even use the word "gay" in an inaugural address. Adding to this evolving support and potential for change, the Supreme Court is set to settle disputes on California's controversial Proposition 8 and the Defense of Marriage Act.

Progressive attitudes towards homosexuality and gay marriage have not been con-



finied to Europe or even to the West. Gay marriage is legal in regions that have traditionally been highly conservative, such as South Africa and Argentina and in some forms in Mexico and Brazil. In 2007, Uruguay began to allow gay couples to enter into civil partnerships, while a year later Colombia granted gay couples the same rights accorded to straight couples in matters of inheritance, insurance, and social-security benefits. Mexico's Supreme Court not only upheld Mexico City's decision to grant gay couples the right to marry, but they also extended the right of adoption to gay couples. Political Studies Professor Omar G. Encarnación (2011) describes Argentina's legalization of gay

marriage in 2010 as "a serious blow to Latin America's longstanding reputation as a bastion of machismo" (104).

Despite the growing global trend toward gay rights, social and political attitudes are not changing everywhere. For example, Chile's conservatism is reflected in their higher age of consent for homosexual couples; Chile is one of four Latin American nations to maintain this distinction (Long, 2012). Similarly, many African nations, despite the progressive attitudes demonstrated in South Africa, are becoming increasingly anti-gay, refusing to grant even basic rights. In 2009, Uganda's legislature considered a bill that would allow the execution of gay Ugandans and impose prison sentences on friends and family who failed to report them. These incidents demonstrate the uphill struggle to achieve even basic rights for the LGBTQI community in some parts of the world.

It is clear that significant progress has been made towards the achievement of equal rights around the world; the global advance of gay marriage can be considered emblematic of this gradual march. Fierce resistance in some regions remains; however, the significant gains seen in Europe and the Americas suggest a global shift for increased equality abroad.

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