

Editor's Note

THE VIEW FROM SOUTH LAWN

After months of vitriolic debate, sweeping legislation changing the very nature of health care in the United States passed through Congress and was signed into law by President Obama in March of 2010. As health care begins to fade from the limelight, the twenty-first *Journal of Politics & Society* seeks to bring to your attention other prominent policy issues, pushing boundaries, borders, and coastlines. The 2010 *Journal* continues its mission of being a truly global publication, providing insight into a kaleidoscope of issues while still remaining relevant to those sitting on the steps of Columbia University in the City of New York. As world leaders pass often through Columbia's gates to speak to undergraduates, we take this opportunity to provide a forum for this attentive audience to let their views be known to the world.

Two prominent thinkers contribute to this relevant conversation, discussing the rising importance of those nations beyond the Atlantic as well as the erratic global economic environment. Dr. Shashi Tharoor speaks of the new "Neighborhood of an Ocean." Expounding on the potential and power of a new and unique non-Western regional organization united by the Indian Ocean, he writes now as India's Minister of External Affairs, reflecting as well on his experience as UN Under-Secretary-General. Commenting on the persistent and painful issue of the past few years, Dr. Dominick Salvatore explains the causes and effects of the continuing financial crisis.

But it is our eight excellent undergraduate authors that make this discussion robust. This year's recipient of the Peter and Katherine Tomassi Prize is José Martinez of Williams College, who examines elite power structures of the Shiite *Ulama* in Iran preceding the 1979 revolution. Martinez challenges conventional notions of Islamic extremism in Iran, and suggest approaching negotiations with an entirely new perspective.

Connecting the past with the present, Nishi Kumar considers the use of new social media by dissidents in Iran's recent election and its impact on mobilization and human rights. Idon Natanzon's

paper on Israeli Unilateralism is particularly timely as the United States challenges Israel on its construction of settlements in East Jerusalem. As Kyrgyzstan experiences mass protests and upheaval, Grace Zhou provides a linguistic perspective to our thoughts by writing about the role of language in Central-Asian nation-building. Of course, no dialogue would be complete without reference to China, and Brian Chao provides a detailed analysis on U.S-China naval competition. Andrei Stetsenko takes us back across the ocean to describe the need for a coordinated transatlantic energy security agreement in order to deny Russia its growing monopoly power. Bill DeBaun anchors us home, tackling crucial domestic concerns by examining the distribution of U.S. education aid. Reminding us of our neighbors down South, Sergio Broholm explores NAFTA's problematic impact on Mexican corn farmers.

The Twenty-First Editorial Board has chosen scholarship that provides readers with a nuanced understanding of those issues that frequent our daily headlines: China, energy, Iran, education, Central Asia, India, the economic recession. The essays' novel contributions equip us with the complex perspectives necessary to understand world events and the growing number of relationships between countries.

This *Journal* is the product of the diligence of the Helvidius Group's excellent staff, and it has been a true privilege to work with them over the past four years. I hope that you enjoy this twenty-first edition and keep the *Journal* in mind as you engage with the relevant issues of our time.

Anusha Sriram
Editor-in-Chief

New York City
April 2010