SCUSA 65:
Navigating Demographic Flows

Populations, Power, and Policy
October 30, 2013 - November 2, 2013
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The African Century? Demography and the Prospect of Development

November 2, 2013

The Africa Roundtable:
  ❖ Student Conference on United States Affairs 65, West Point, NY

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The United States Federal Government’s Africa policy will be the most effective if it focuses on engagement at the regional level and coordinating policy with regional forces in mind, as African countries are increasingly doing through their regional economic and military cooperation organizations.

**East and Central Africa**

In the coming 21st Century, East and Central Africa require unique strategies to deal with region specific problems. While there are multiple strategies that the United States (U.S.) should adopt in their application, these strategies evolve from a central narrative. American involvement should occur through the empowerment of regional organizations to influence the application of human rights into policy and strategy.

First, the U.S. should support local military and policy by not only providing training but also installing doctrines grounded in human rights to institutionalize the rule of law in military action. These doctrines will also hinder military corruption and misuse of force. Meanwhile, joint operations between nations provide a framework for continued integration and empowerment. The U.S. should train regional forces in network analysis to combat terrorism and provide logistical and financial support to ensure that organizational structures are effective.

Incentivizing good governments and institutions are also necessary in accomplishing American security and economic interests. Good governance includes projecting power to the periphery to create total sovereignty for a nation. Empowering specific organizations like the African Union, East African Community and Economic Community of Central African States creates continental and regional integration and ensures accountability among nations. For example, Tanzania should continue to serve as the standard bearer for stability and good governance in these regional organizations.

The United States should also bolster USAID by expanding programs of education and scholarship opportunities. However, each nation must ensure that basic needs of citizens preclude security and good governance. Without the first, it is extremely difficult for the others to be effectively implemented.

U.S. strategy should also confront disease and malnutrition. The threats of food and water deficiencies increase with the projected demographic changes. While understanding that government institutions grow through its application of aid, America should devote funds away from wasteful government spending and invest in NGO and foundations that apply the resources where they are most needed.

The creation of China as an eternal enemy needs to be diminished. There are common interests of cooperative security that should be advanced and there need to be multilateral discussions on the future of the continent. Chinese and American relations should not be framed in a manner where conflicted is inevitable. At the same time, African nations and their organizations should have a seat on the table for their own future. These strategies are meant to do one thing, empower Africans to confront African problems.
Overall, it is necessary to view the development of democracy in Africa over the long term. Aspects of culture and tradition that influence aspects of government will only subside after sustained dedication to the institutions. American stability and order was not accomplished overnight. Either will Africa’s.

**West Africa**

The most important West African country for U.S. interests is Nigeria due to its oil, increasing demographics, and contributions to regional influences. Nigeria is a developing democracy that is constantly growing in population. By 2050, the population in Africa will increase to 1.1 billion, 20% of which will occur specifically in Nigeria. This booming population is in U.S interests for two reasons: oil and security.

The oil that comes from Nigeria makes up 8% of the United States oil imports. In comparison to the 11% that the United States imports from Saudi Arabia, Nigerian oil is better quality because it is more easily refined. This figure is expected to grow due to the increasing bilateral trade between the two countries. Furthermore, the trading with Nigeria for oil is more preferable because we share common democratic values.

Increased population can overwhelm the system. If the United States does nothing, the population boom will exacerbate the insecurity threats in Nigeria. The United States will stay in Nigeria because of oil. Since the United States has long lasting interests in Nigeria, we have options of how we aid Nigeria during its population boom. We will avoid being partial to any one region because that can exacerbate divisions. We should aid local NGOs (since we won’t throw money at government) so that people develop socially and democratically to secure our exports. Thus, aid to local citizens is important.

Looking at the security concerns in the West African region a major country of focus will be Mali. To promote the institutional strength of Mali’s new government we believe that the United States should further ally itself with regional organizations such as ECOWAS. Direct US intervention has the potential to convey itself as either favoritism to a side or unnecessary intervention. If the United States increased relations with Nigeria, the United States would have a greater input into the decisions of ECOWAs because Nigeria is such a strong player in the organization. During the presidential elections in Mali, ECOWAS required Mali to reinstate its constitution before the elections were held, thus demonstrating the political power of regional organizations.

Promoting stability throughout the entire region is the goal of the United States. States such as Ghana and Senegal are examples within West Africa, whose strong democratic institutions should serve as examples of stability and freedom. The United States could construct policy which would create favorable trade relationships and aid to these countries in the hopes that their governmental systems might serve as a model for other countries in the region.
Southern Africa

The Southern region of Africa is probably the African region where the concept of the US as an aid donor and Africa as an aid recipient least applies. US affairs should look at this region more as a business partner and region for bilateral investment. In social terms, the Southern African region doesn’t present major ethnical or religious differences. Thus, sources of conflict are more related to social unrest, due to social inequalities than to political divergences.

Economically this region is relatively stable, with most countries having strong institutions and a higher level of educated citizens. Most countries are also part of the British Commonwealth, which could leverage the cooperation with the USA.

In terms of American interests in this region, the main areas for investment could be energy, and mainly renewable energies, mineral resources, infrastructure (railroads and roads) systems. However, there are issues in the region that can undermine this cooperation, namely public health issues related to poor nutrition and HIV endemic diseases that can impact the productivity level and life expectancy rate. On the other hand, social inequalities and corruption can increase crime rates and social instability, which might affect foreign investment.

With that being said, there are many prospective opportunities for the US within this region. The US, besides promoting investment through agreements, deals and forums like AGOA, can also provide aid in the form of education and cultural programs, as well as cooperation in research and training of African manpower.

Finally, population growth is likely to continue but with the increase in life expectancy rates, the dependency ratio is becoming more balanced. At the same time the demographic dividend can be positive in this region, if the governments correctly invests in education, health, institutional capacity building and good governance. However, citizens must be prepared to hold their leaders accountable for their actions in order for this cooperation to be successful.
TMI? Privacy and the Promise of “Big Data”
National Security Resolution on Control and Use of Digital Information

We believe it is the responsibility of the United States government to foster innovation and the free flow of digital information while maintaining both national security interests and the constitutional rights of its citizens.

Our current systems are not suitable to contend with the increasing amounts of data from both a security and innovation perspective. The current policy regarding the collection and use of data in the public and private sphere is cobbled together by disparate congressional committees, multiple executive departments, and varying precedents set by the judiciary. FISA, the 1974 Privacy Act, and HIPPA do not provide a clear focus or strategy for utilizing our rapidly expanding supply of data.¹ This patchwork system fails to adequately confront the problems we face today and lacks the ability to address the inevitable technological advancements that will result in continued expansion of available data. The correct approach is to focus more on the control of how data is analyzed and less on the acceptable types and methods of data collection.

Shortcomings in our current system include the lack of collaboration between private and public entities, and limited transparency and accountability in the data collection process. The expanse of data that is being collected and the new possibilities for analysis unlock tremendous possibilities in the arenas of the public sector such as public health, law enforcement, education, infrastructure management, etc.² Digital information analytics will enable a better understanding of the changing demographics in the United States and around the world, and the use of that knowledge and predictive power will inform better policies and better protect our citizens.³ The analysis of large stores of digital information will reduce waste, maximize efficient interactions, propel productivity and predict optimal courses of action in every sector.⁴ Thus, it is in the United States’ best interests to implement a cohesive, strategic council dedicated to manage the current and future potential of large stores of data. We propose a Joint Committee of Congress and a Council of Digital Information to provide a framework to deal with the issues large amounts of data will create in the future:

Policy

(a) We recommend the creation of a Council of Digital Information in the executive branch overseen by a director appointed by the President who will serve at the President’s discretion. In order to protect national security, the flow of information and innovation, and civil liberties, we need entities that will foster

¹ Buytendijk, Frank, and Jay Heiser. “Confronting the Privacy and Ethical Risks of Big Data.” The Financial Times (24 September 2013).
innovation, serve as liaisons, and regulate each of these pillars. Therefore, the
Council will consist of nine offices. Each office will have a strategic officer, and
these nine officers will form the working group of the council.\(^1\) (See Appendix 1.)
(b) Biannually, the working group will meet with the President along with the
strategic advisory committee. The committee will be comprised of representatives
that are experts in the following fields: national and international security,
technology, civil liberty protection, finance, telecommunications, energy,
academia, and private industry.
(c) This council will be evaluated by the Joint Committee of Congress described in
(d) every four years to determine whether its status is sufficient or if it should
evolve. Additionally, these four year evaluations will determine whether or not
the director should be confirmed by the Senate to ensure public accountability.
(d) Additionally, we propose the creation of a Joint Committee of Congress in
response to our finding that no current congressional committee adequately
addresses all of the concerns we have raised about the future of digital
information. The creation of a cohesive entity will draw on preexisting
committees such as the courts, the Intellectual Property and Internet
Subcommittee, the Cyber Security Infrastructure Protection and Security
Technologies Subcommittee, and the Permanent Select Committee on
Intelligence.

The proposed changes appeal to the public and private sectors because they provide the
opportunity for open exchange of information between entities in a way that has not been
formalized before. The council and the joint committee will establish an environment in which
the government does not intrude on private data interests, where private industry does not
impede national security, and in which civil liberties remain intact. Streamlining the processes of
requesting warrants for specific information’s use and collection, for example, will encourage
transparency while fostering public trust and accountability.

Every major technological innovation in the history of this country has unveiled new challenges
for its best uses and regulations. The power of knowledge and information, which are being
collected at a rate that is increasing exponentially, requires intelligent use and specific protocols
to prevent abuse or infringements on civil liberties.\(^5\) The proposed policy seeks to maximize the
productive power of big data, while maintaining the national security interests of the country and
protecting individuals’ freedoms. These changes represent our belief that each of these values
can be maintained and prioritized in concert, without undue infringement on the integrity of the
others.

\(^{5}\) “Data, Data Everywhere,” The Economist (25 February 2010)
Appendix 1

Legislative Branch Structure
Joint-Committee (including bipartisan representation from both the house and senate)

Executive Branch Hierarchy
Director of the Council on Digital Information (1)
Strategic Advisory Committee Members (7-12)
Sub-Council Department Heads (9)

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<th>Data Accessibility</th>
<th>Civil Liberties</th>
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<td>Fostering Innovation</td>
<td>Advocating against country-control of the internet</td>
<td>Promoting Research into new technical and analytic methods</td>
<td>Ensuring that our liberties and values are protected as technology evolves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liaisons</td>
<td>Promoting Strong relationships between departments within the government</td>
<td>Promoting strong relationships between public and private sectors</td>
<td>Promoting education and strengthening public relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulation</td>
<td>Overseeing intelligence agencies</td>
<td>Watching and ensuring that the public and private sectors conforms to law</td>
<td>Liberties court</td>
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Rich and Poor, Young and Old: Demographic Challenges to China’s Rise

November 12, 2013

The China Roundtable:

Student Conference on United States Affairs 65, West Point, NY
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Dr. Angel Hsu, Co-Chair
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Theodore Fong, Roundtable Discussion Leader, United States Military Academy
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In recent years, significant shifts in the demographic landscape within the People’s Republic of China have led to new complications in American policy-making. Demographic issues, such as an ageing population, an increasing gender imbalance and an intractable rural-urban divide, undermine China’s rapidly growing economy and engender potential domestic social and political unrest. As China’s major trading partner and the ally of many states within China’s sphere of influence in the Asia-Pacific region, the United States faces several undesirable diplomatic, economic and security repercussions if it fails to develop a cogent contingency plan. As such, this paper proposes three comprehensive foreign policies, which promote military, education and economic partnership, to confront the rising demographic challenges in China.

Demographic Issues

The demographic changes in China are quickly redefining the local way of life and leading to massive repercussions within the Chinese economy. First, ageing population has resulted from the one-child policy, changing social norms and improving rising average income. The legal constraints on household sizes induce Chinese people to raise fewer children, but this relative decrease in youth population has not coincided with equal decrease in adult population. Instead, better healthcare, enabled by economic growth, has extended average age expectancy and thus maintained a stable level of older population. According to Feng Wang in “Racing Towards the Precipice” people over the age of 65 now account for one out of every ten people in China. The labour surplus that once fueled Chinese growth is becoming a deficit as the Chinese workforce shrinks. This trend leads to higher wages and a less lucrative economic environment for foreign investors. The effect on America will be less serious, but still has the potential to be disconcerting. Strains on Chinese government spending and market imbalances create major changes in trade relations. A reduction in surplus labor means less labor-intensive products exported to the United States.

Second, a societal preference for men over women has resulted in a gender imbalance. According to the Guardian as of 2010, there are only 100 women for every 118 men, creating a social phenomena referred to as “bare branches.” These individuals do not have the access to education or the financial resources to be competitive in the marriage market. This phenomenon creates a sizable male population that is highly prone to civil unrest and violent behaviours. This large population of young, single men, unable to find wives, has a greater incentive than married men to participate in human right violations such as human trafficking, drug trafficking, and sexual assault. Consequently, the increase in bare branches leads to an unsafe working environment for US companies, and as a result, a decrease in American foreign direct investment (FDI) in China.

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6 Feng Wang, "Racing Towards the Precipice," The Brookings Institution.
7 Tania Branigan, "China's great gender crisis," the Guardian.
Finally, Chinese domestic policy has actively ensured a divide between rural and urban populations to prevent unsustainable, unstable urbanization. The Hukou system hampered migrations from rural areas to cities and limited educational opportunities for some relatively less wealth provinces\textsuperscript{8}. The swiftness of urbanization and industrialization has been limited by the Hukou system, as workers do not receive adequate training or access to job market due to short-term constraints on China’s domestic resources. The availability for education will create a higher skilled worker who will contribute to a more productive economy, but developing such a comprehensive education system requires time and concerted governmental effort.

Regional instability is certainly an important factor as China grows in power and influence. The outlined demographic issues may considerably contribute to domestic instability and they must be addressed if there is to be an absolute assurance of security in region surrounding China as it grows. While not much can be done to change policies within China from the United States, U.S. foreign policies can be administered to stem the consequences of the demographic changes protecting our interest in the region of reducing the likelihood of civil unrest and instability.

**Policy Prescription**

Indeed, ageing population, increasing gender imbalance and an intractable rural-urban divide in China may significantly damage American interests in terms of maintaining stable regional security and strong Sino-American economic ties. Our policy proposals primarily address the strategic interests of regional stability and economic stability through military, education and economic partnership with China.

The key reasons for pursuing partnership rather aggressive containment policies are threefold: strategic value of China as a trading partner, America’s resource constraints, and regional concerns. China currently serves as the largest lender and overall trader with United States. Any policy that risks further antagonism or mistrust will likely lead to worse outcomes on the prisoner-dilemma equilibrium, in which both sides adopt aggressive trade policies such as artificial devaluation or rising tariffs. Furthermore, America’s rising debt, cumbersome domestic spending, and involvement in global regions, such as the Middle East, minimizes America’s capacity to fully rebalance in the Asia-Pacific. Excessive security buildup not only exhausts America’s precious state resource but also precipitates unnecessary military aggression from China that threatens both sides’ allies and heightens the Asia-Pacific military tension. Lastly, in light of North-South Korea confrontations and South China water dispute, any form of partnership may lead to constructive dialogues between both sides and an abatement in regional hostility. There may even be potential for concessions from both sides, if America is willing to initiate mutually beneficial cooperation.

In line with previous considerations, our recommendation to strengthen regional stability is to increase cooperation between the militaries of these two nations. President Obama has expressed

\textsuperscript{8} Tiejun Cheng and Mark Selden, "The Origins and Social Consequences of China’s Hukou System," 644-645
a shift in American grand strategy from the Middle-East to the Asian Pacific\(^9\). With this, the U.S. will see an increase in joint-military exercises with its already established allies; but we must also see an increase in these training events between China and the United States. Additionally, seeing a larger exchange between American and Chinese cadets and officers will better foster trust and cooperation between these two Pacific powers. More important than an increase in cooperation, this military outreach will better allow the U.S. to monitor the strength and growth of the Chinese military. As the Chinese population and their demand for resources increase, there is a potential risk of Chinese expansion into other areas in the region. Our increased military presence in the region serves to deter any sort of aggressive expansion on the part of the Chinese, and our new cooperation would allow us to better regulate the strength and capabilities of the Chinese military.

Another partnership may result from the significant disparity in domestic education level, which has plagued both countries in recent years. The demographic transitions in China have exacerbated urban-rural divide, and they pose an unprecedented danger to Sino-American relationship. Our second policy proposal aims to promote cross-cultural competency and address this rising social challenge in both US and China. Specifically, we seek to foster cooperation in post-secondary education to resolve the education deficit in China and lagging competitiveness of American students\(^10\). We propose a two-tiered approach to this issue by providing distinct exchange programs for rural and urban youths in China with American students. These programs have shared short-term and long-term benefits for both nations, but they primarily serve American interest as they effectively address several key challenges to future American development: lagging academic competitiveness, declining relative economic output, and deficiency in cross-cultural competence, especially among American youths.

This cross-national program will operate under two different streams—rural and urban—to focus on attracting talents with different backgrounds. Key factors in evaluating the students’ acceptance into these programs are family income, academic potential, and individuals’ adaptability to new environment. Students endowed with higher level of family resource will be accepted into the first program, with minimal financial support and logistical assistance. Disadvantaged students with minority background, less access to higher level education or family support will enter the second program, with substantial financial support and logistical assistance. The funding of these programs is primarily sponsored by the students’ country of origin, but both countries will cooperate in terms of expediting visa processes and local integration. The key distinction of this program from previous exchange programs is its increased scale and its recognition of regional resource disparity in China.

There are significant benefits to this two-tiered program. First, further expansion and diversification of talents in American higher-level education will facilitate friendly


competitiveness within American institutions and strengthen the employability and productivity of future American labourers. Second, with reforms in immigration policies, there will be potential retention of international talent that raises overall American productivity and initiate a plethora of new job opportunities and generation of ideas. Third, the exposure for international students to foreign countries fosters worldly perspective and promotes insight into either Chinese or American domestic realities. To explain, exchange students will likely bring back positive cultural and social insights into their respective countries and facilitate future cross-national dialogue.

Certainly, this policy is grounded in realities as it aligns with many Chinese interests in their confrontation of demographic transition. The increased opportunities for quality education, of which there is currently a shortage in China, are much desired as China moves towards an ageing demographic with higher needs for a more productive workforce. As well, expanding educational partnership with America consolidates China’s position as a potential global leader and reinforces China’s domestic perception of the central government. The heightened educational level in China also minimizes income disparity and rural-urban divide.

Our final policy seeks to stabilize the demographic-induced economic transitions of China, specifically the issue with ageing demographics. As its young, working-age population diminishes in size, China has more incentive to shift from an exports-based economy, which is heavily reliant on a large labor force, to one more focused on managerial talents and domestic consumption. To ensure that America still has a presence in the Chinese economy, we must find ways to incentivize U.S. industries to provide more foreign direct investment within China. We propose to institute tax breaks on U.S. companies that provide foreign direct investment – particularly in China. These tax breaks would not apply to companies that simply divert jobs away from America, but rather those companies that invest in higher-level economic sectors, growing the share power in both the U.S. and China. In addition to these breaks, we would add a specific timeframe for these breaks. By instituting a finite timeframe where these tax breaks are applicable, we also incentivize the Chinese government to adopt reforms that make their economy more business friendly to international investors. Though not the targeted goal, this policy could additionally provide long-term benefits of seeing China engage in social reform – as we have seen a correlation in the past between increased economic freedoms and societal change.

Conclusion

Ultimately, the future of Sino-American relation depends on cooperation in various forms. Through increasing military, education and economic partnership, U.S. gradually minimizes antagonism and establishes a basis for dialogue. Demographic issues significantly affect regional stability and trans-Pacific both in short-term and long-term, but through constructive policies, reliant on genuine mutual trust and cooperation, U.S. protects mutual interest.
References


From Mil to Civ: The Downsizing US Military and the Future of Civil-Military Relations

November 2, 2013

The Civ-Mil Roundtable:

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  Melanie Gierhardt, Zeppelin University
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  Shawn Isenegger, Washington College
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  Adrien McClane, John Jay College
  Joe Palmer, Northern Illinois University
  Joshua Pomeroy, United States Military Academy
  Raúl Quintana, Harvard University
  Kathryn Richardson, Baylor University
  Devin Teson, Marist College
  Brandon Tower, Gettysburg College
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Introduction

The relationship between the civilian and military spheres in the United States is critical to the national defense and security of American citizens. A mutual understanding and effective working relationship between the two enables an all volunteer force to be successful, but this relationship is changing in the US. LTC Daniel Gade has noted that nearly 14 million more soldiers served in WWII than in Iraq and Afghanistan. As the percentage of society who has served in the military continues to decrease, we are beginning to observe an increasing gap between the number of service members and the size of the US population. During WWII, eight percent of Americans had served in the armed forces, even though the population was half its current size. Today, less than one percent of Americans have served. This demographic change directly threatens the understanding and cooperative relationship between civilians and the military. The resulting lack of contact between civilians and service members has fostered an increasing apathy toward the military amongst the general population. Without action to reverse the physical and psychological separation between civilians and soldiers, mutual trust will break down. The erosion of trust threatens the ability of the military, government, and society to work together in order to defend and serve the nation. One way to close this widening gap is by ensuring that service members of the US military are better equipped to reintegrate into civilian society after their service, and that civil society and government institutions provide more effective support in the process of veteran reintegration.

Policy Point 1: Department of Defense transformation of transition practices.

As the first line of oversight for military personnel, the Department of Defense (DOD) has direct responsibility to ensure all of its service members receive sufficient preparation to transition from military to civilian life. By making transitional training one of its main priorities, the DoD will prepare veterans for integration into the civilian workforce. There are currently 2,071,000 veterans in the civilian labor force, 9.9 percent of whom are unemployed. This is 2 points higher than the 7.9 percent unemployment rate for non-veteran workers. Furthermore, 44% of post-9/11 veterans said their readjustment to civilian life was difficult, according to a recent Pew survey. It is evident that the DoD must take initiative to reduce unemployment amongst veterans and give their best effort to protect civilian-military relations.

Based on the success of the current Army initiative known as Warrior Transition Brigades (WTB), the DoD will expand the efforts of these brigades throughout all branches of the military by establishing a Joint Transition Command. While current Army WTBs only assist injured

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veterans, the new Joint Transition Command will expand the program to all veterans to create opportunities for transitional education from military to civilian life. Specifically, the implementation of Warrior Transition Units will include:

1. All veterans will be required by their service contracts to attend a Warrior Transition Unit for 6-8 weeks in order to leave their military service.
2. Warrior Transition Units will be established at bases that traditionally host transitioning troops (e.g. Camp Pendleton, Fort Hood).
3. Warrior Transition Units will include a trained cadre of military and civilian personnel who will provide guidance to the cohort of transitioning troops.
4. The transition training curriculum provided to all troops will comprehensively address the various aspects of transition, which may include guidance on education, employment, family assistance, and financial management.
5. In order to provide unit cohesion, transitioning troops will move through the process as a unit. Officers and enlisted personnel in the process of transition will form part of the WTUs chain of command.
6. In order to collect accurate information on disabilities acquired through military service, service members in the WTUs will be required to complete a mandatory ability/disability assessment and physical screening before their end of active service date. These examinations will be performed by VA doctors under the new framework proposed below.

WTUs will create a standardized process under which military personnel will receive adequate training before reintegrating into civilian life. They will also make an effort to handle the specific needs of individual soldiers, as exemplified by the current Warrior Transition Brigades now in place. All three groups—civilians, government, and military—will work cohesively to reverse the breakdown of civilian and military interactions. However, WTUs will make a determined effort to cooperate with local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community organizations (e.g. Chambers of Commerce) in order to foster relationships based on trust and understanding, which will create incentives for local employers to hire transitioning service members.

Policy Point 2: Civilian Initiatives to Assist in Service Member’s Transition from Military Life

Civilians have an essential responsibility to provide adequate resources to strengthen the bond between themselves and the military. While the DoD prepares soldiers to transition out of the military, civilian groups such as NGOs, veteran organizations (e.g. American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars), and local communities have an obligation to create an informed populace vis-à-vis military affairs and to develop connections between military service and civilian employment.
NGOs will work with WTUs to provide individual service members with information about opportunities in their local communities. Once soldiers have been assigned to their WTU unit, the Department of Veteran Affairs will identify relevant NGOs based on an evaluation of service records, medical examinations, and the needs of the individual soldier.

NGOs will also work with WTUs to inform transitioning veterans about initiatives such as American Legion Baseball that integrate veterans within their local communities. These interactions will strengthen the social connections between civilians and the military, thus warding off rising apathy, and opening up possible employment opportunities for veterans.

At the same time, local community leaders must assume primary responsibility for encouraging interaction between civilians and transitioning military personnel. These connections foster relationships at a personal level, which are much more effective at providing support than large impersonal announcements.

**Policy Point 3: Governmental Alterations Regarding Military to Civil Transitions**

The current jurisdictions between the DoD and the VA are ambiguous in relation to veteran’s compensation and benefits packages. Institutional redundancies make it difficult to adequately allocate disability benefits for veterans. We propose that the VA be made responsible for all end of service and retirement examinations currently performed by the DoD, including those that are currently voluntary. These examinations will be made mandatory for all service member discharged under condition other than dishonorably. The new policy will streamline the process, address soldier’s individual needs, and increase consistency in processing disability claims.

The mandatory examinations will serve several purposes:

1. To clearly delineate which institution is responsible for medical care at a particular point of the transitional process
2. To eliminate possible redundancies arising from different institutional prerogatives during the determination of health benefits
3. To eliminate the need for individual veterans to seek out the VA after reintegration in order to reduce the likelihood that veterans will delay the application process for particular benefits
4. To create a much more complete record of veteran profiles so that VA offices will be able to be more aware of those who are in need of their services.

Dividing the responsibility of deciding disability compensation and veteran education will remove the DoD’s incentive to attribute veteran’s injuries to causes other than military service. Regrettfully, the DoD has set a precedent of not awarding veterans adequate compensation since physical examinations have not been standardized and consistent. Thus, the government should establish the DoD’s responsibility to educate and train veterans while the VA is responsible for conducting mandatory physicals and establishing medical compensations for disabled veterans.
We also suggest that a new status should be created to distinguish active service members from those who are beginning to reenter civilian life: Transient. Although Transients would still fall under the authority of the DoD, as they will have not yet fulfilled their full service obligation, for the duration of their transition process, this new status will indicate the introduction of the VA as the sole institution responsible for managing their health care and concerns. These governmental policy changes will ensure that disability claims are treated fairly without any self-conflicting interests and that veteran’s medical and educational needs as Transients are handled effectively, thus easing the search for employment in the civilian sector.

Conclusion

As the protectors of the American people, the military must be able to maintain a relationship of understanding and trust with civilians. Such a relationship will not be sustained unless civilians, the government and the military work cohesively to accomplish the same goal. While this policy does not correct every error in the reintegration process, it is a holistic effort to address current shortcomings and provide opportunities for veterans to assimilate back into civilian life quickly and efficiently. With the downsizing of the US military and the relatively rapid expansion of the veteran population, the quick implementation of our policy is vital to address the current shortcomings of veteran reintegration policy.
Old Europe: Muslim Migration and the Rebirth of the European Union
The signing of the Treaty of Rome in March 1957 signaled the intention of European leaders to create an ever-closer union among the states of Europe. The European Economic Community formalized the notion that the future of a continent destroyed by two World Wars would be characterized by cooperation and integration. This international partnership was not restricted to just European countries; the inclusion of the United States and Canada into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization represented shared transatlantic interests. Today, trade and cultural exchange between the European Union and the United States constitute vital sources of mutual potential for growth. Additionally, the persistence of NATO following the end of the Cold War demonstrates that both sides of the Atlantic continue to recognize the strategic value of a transatlantic partnership. Economic integration between the two parties has also characterized their relations in the past sixty years, as both America and Europe understand that free trade is mutually beneficial. With the discussion of adopting the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, the future of these two continents will only become further intertwined. In order to ensure continued collaborative success, it is valuable to draw on past experience and present predictions to adopt a balanced approach for future development.

The changing demography of Europe points to causes for concern for long-term interests of both Europe and the United States. Europe's population is shrinking. Today, women need to give birth to 2.1 children in order to sustain a current population level; in 2006, women in the European Union gave birth to an average of 1.38 children and this is not likely to have increased significantly in the past seven years [source: EUCE]. Additionally, the current population of Europe is and its demography will continue to become much older. The significance of this implication is that the dependency ratio - the number of people over 65 relative to those aged 15-64 - is projected to double and surpass 50% by 2050 [EC report]. What this implies, in layman's terms, is that there will be only two citizens of working age to support one retired person (aged 65 years or older) [Ibid.]. Furthermore, the working-age population (15-64) will decrease by 48 million between now and 2050 [Ibid.].

Demographic fluctuations will have significant economic implications for Europe, including a shrinking workforce and a rising trend towards gerontocracy and pension-system stress. With a looming population imbalance, economic productivity does not sustain the needs of the older segment of the population, leading to the impending reality of decline in the European Union’s economic prestige. Immigration to Europe provides an outside source to increased demand for labor; however, EU member states have traditionally struggled with incorporating immigrants into their societies. In order to promote economic growth and alleviate pressure on social welfare programs, immigration can seek to attract and retain a skilled labor force.

Greater immigration into the European Union of both highly skilled laborers and those willing and able to hold menial labor positions necessary to the economy must be promoted through a EU-wide policy. Immigration reform and a NAFTA-EU trade agreement are the strategic means necessary to promote a stronger European economy and more favorable trade conditions between the EU and its transatlantic allies while promoting cultural diversity and
alleviating combating social pressures caused by Europe’s currently stressed social demography. In this increasingly inter-connected global society, it goes without saying that the economic and social future of the European Union has a direct impact on parallel conditions within the United States. Stresses in one society significantly affect those conditions within the other, and therefore it is within the European Union and the United States’ best interests to collaborate to combat these problems.

We would like to propose avenues for such growth in the form of immigration reform and an encouraged dialogue on a free trade agreement between NAFTA and the EU in the interest of promoting greater economic development and an atmosphere of increased stability through heightened communication.

Cross-Cultural dialogue and Education Initiatives

Education is a key factor in successfully assimilating immigrants into their host-nation societies. Education, both for immigrants and their children, is the most direct form of cross-cultural exposure in societies and a means of promoting equity, social cohesion, and active citizenship within EU member states. Along these lines, in attempting to alleviate the stress of the immigration process for individuals and their host societies, the member states of the European Union should engage in major educational initiatives in order to maximize the benefits of cross-cultural dialogue.

To provide a certain example in support of the importance of cross-cultural learning in early childhood education, we can look to a Canadian federally funded research project which was aimed at the environmental impacts on young childhood development. This study, which included many universities over the period of five years, concluded that “bi-cultural, co-constructed interpretations of development and early learning” can potentially create an avoidance of impacts of a singular dominant cultural lens and “insistence on unidirectional assimilation that has been the hallmark of colonialism.”14 Understanding that cultures are always changing, proves the importance of early childhood education, to cushion the culture shock of these transformations.

We agree with the European Commission that cultural diversity is vital for enriching local cultures and societies and should be welcome. However the cultural identity, core values and fundamental rights of the host country should not be weakened.15 As a means of ensuring the linguistic and cultural integrity of the nation is upheld, the education classes of children of both immigrant and native populations should be taught in the official language(s) of the nation. While it is recommended that classes be taught in the official language(s) of the state as a means of bringing about greater assimilation of immigrant populations, policy makers must be sensitive to the potential lack of linguistic skills of newly arrived immigrants. For this reason, and in this

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14 Culture and Early Childhood Education (2010)
15 European Commission Green paper on migration and EU education systems (2008)
regard, it is recommended that the European Union emphasize across the continent the increased access of information on member states’ education systems in the native language of their most-common immigrant populations. As seen in the 2009 Eurydice study titled, “Integrating Immigrant Children into Schools in Europe,” the discrepancies between EU member states’ policies regarding linguistic exposure to education systems prove to be a fundamental weakness in promoting immigrant children and their families to enter into the state education system. An EU-wide policy promoting information on education systems in immigrants’ native languages will only promote more immigrant families entering into the education system.

Furthermore, the European Union may promote its values and commitments to the democratic process and active citizen engagement through endorsing the enactment of a widespread EU education curriculum among member states’ education systems. This initiative may draw further attention to both the diverse nations making up the European Union as well as the potential for citizens to maximize their ability to travel and work throughout the continent. A better-informed and engaged population may only benefit the European Union as a whole, especially in the face of increasing immigration within and to Europe.

Recognizing the European Union’s promotion of a vital and active population through lifelong learning, the United States (?) recommends the European Union actively promote a partnership with civil service institutions to increase adult immigrant access to low-cost and high-quality language learning programs. Relevant educational, non-governmental, and cultural organizations are particularly crucial in supporting immigrant’s assimilation into host societies through their financial and resource support of linguistic programs supporting immigrants’ immersion into new societies. A partnership between the EU and civil society institutions and organizations is an effective means of engaging society to enter into cross-cultural dialogue and exchange with immigrant populations across Europe.

This exchange between populations has been a major initiative of the European Union since the enactment of the Erasmus academic exchange among European citizens. The recognition of the benefits of cross-cultural dialogue and the European continent’s high cultural diversity should continue to be promoted by the European Union and its institutions. The Erasmus program is an example of a highly successful initiative by the EU in order to promote cross-cultural awareness within the European continent. As of the 25th anniversary of the program in 2012, “each year more than 230,000” European students engage in Erasmus, promoting cultural exchange and immersion with the purpose of promoting perceptions of European citizenship across the continent. Recognizing that immigration is an issue affecting all EU member states, the promotion of a greater awareness of the continent can only benefit those who choose to immigrate to Europe.

EU member states and the institutions of the European Union may further promote cultural integration and assimilation for the betterment of larger European society by encouraging and/or funding increased cultural awareness events. Events and festivals

highlighting and celebrating differences in cultures within EU states will further the cultural awareness necessary to the integration of the European Union community as a whole. Increased connections within the European community as a result of globalization and increasing regional interdependence has historically been the basis for the European Union project as a whole, and will continue to shape future successes of the integration initiative. If the European Union seeks to adopt a successful comprehensive immigration policy to combat current discrepancies within the region it must be supplemented by corresponding social, cultural, and education policy initiatives.

C. Immigration Practice Reform

Recognizing the current demographic conditions faced by the European Union and the nature of this increasingly globalized and interconnected world, it is in the best interest of the European Union and its allies overseas to attract to the current European workforce highly skilled laborers from abroad. In order to facilitate this process and lure high-valued skills to the region, structural reform of the European Union immigration policy must occur, specifically in regards to centralizing and standardizing the process of granting and encouraging immigration to the region.

As exists currently, there is a wide discrepancy between the domestic policies of EU member states’ enactment of the European Union blue card, a system instituted in 2008. The EU blue card is the primary paperwork necessary in order for immigrants to legally work within the Schengen borders. With the enactment of the Schengen system in 1995 it is widely accepted that the decision made by a state in admitting an individual into its borders to work affects all other states within the Schengen system. As a part of its historic development the European Union has identified the fundamental freedom of individuals to both: first, apply to reside in a country and second, to travel throughout the European Union once legally admitted into the region.

The widespread standardization of the process used to obtain a blue card within all European Union member states is the most efficient way to attract workers to fill the skill sets and jobs needed by the European Union economy. Looking to the German model adopted in 2012, an immigrant applying for a position in Germany needs to hold a recognized higher education degree in order to have easier access to the German labor market, and likewise needs to be approved by the German Federal Employment Agency. In order to receive the blue card, an individual must give proof of their qualifications and evidence of a concrete job offer. This, inevitably has led to an increased focus on the STEM fields as well as the medical field.

In comparison, the EU blue card standards set by the domestic government of Poland requires proof of an employment contract lasting more than 12 months, a guaranteed salary in this position higher than the minimum standard set by the Polish government, and the individual must have a confirmed source of health insurance. Furthermore, the local labor market must confirm that there is no individual located within the local area who is equally qualified for the position. This logistical dissymmetry by which EU member states function creates a reality
wherein certain member states are targeted for their lax or lesser standards to receive a blue card, prompting populations to go where the standards are lower, not necessarily where their skill sets are needed.

In terms of standardizing the visa application process, those individuals possessing highly-demand skills looking to enter the European Union for the purpose of accessing higher education or greater employment prospects should apply for these opportunities through a streamlined application process. The goal for the European Union and its economic partners is to attract those skill sets needed within their increasingly interconnected economies, encouraging the filling of those holes present in the current demographic population. For this reason, the process not only has to be streamlined for highly desirable visa candidates, but every measure should be made to encourage those individuals interested in applying for citizenship or job permits to stay within the region, in their desired/present country. Within this context, it is recommended that the European Union continues to emphasize its current family reunification policy, keeping families and generations centered in a particular area, forging stronger ties to local economies as well as greater chances of cultural assimilation.

This process needs to be accompanied by a self-study within the European Union over what skill sets are currently lacking within the regional economy. Only in recognizing the weaknesses of the current economy can European states (and by extension, the European Union) strengthen the European economy and promote higher standards of living across the continent. Creating a European Union database by which individuals may match up their skills possessed to those needed on a state by state basis encourages both inter-state cooperation and information sharing as well as strategic targeting for the individual’s job application process.

In creating a more universal visa policy, one of the strengths of the American immigration policy is the transparency by which it functions. From the experiences of the United States, it is recommended that the member states of the European Union should pursue a similar policy wherein individuals must universally hold residence in those countries wherein they apply for citizenship for three to five years prior to their application. The exact time frame is to be determined by the individual member state, therein providing some leeway for the member state, but ultimately it is standardized enough for knowledge of the policy to become widespread and commonly understood.

United States strongly support establishment of a common immigration policy within EU. Ever increasing global population movements will not go away and must be addressed in a common and efficient way, in order to stabilize both the European Union system as well as its economic and political allies.
D. Welfare and Pension reform

The population of the EU is expected to reach 517 million in 2060, with nearly one-third of its citizens will then be aged 65 or over\(^\text{17}\). While longer life expectancies of Europe are a significant achievement, the ageing population coupled with low birth rates poses significant challenges for their economic and welfare systems. The demographic changes are expected to have substantial consequences on public finances for many E.U. member states. On the basis of current policies, age-public pension expenditure alone is expected to increase to 13 percent of GDP by 2060\(^\text{18}\). This should be kept under ten percent of GDP expenditures. In order to offset the cost of increased pension spending, the United States recommends that the E.U. should look to increase the pension age and privatize pension funds.

As life expectancy increases, the United States suggests increasing the minimum age for pension collection. Life expectancy at birth is projected to increase from 76.7 years in 2010 to 84.6 in 2060 for men and from 82.5 to 89.1 for women\(^\text{19}\). The average pension age currently for E.U. countries is roughly 62\(^\text{20}\). By 2060, governments are looking to increase the minimum age for retirement to 70. Incentives are needed to keep populations working longer by using different categories for pension amount based on age group. The later one retires, the larger the pension amount one collects. The earliest minimum age group should be fifty, while the maximum should be 70. The difference of 20 years would be divided into four different age ranges, much like the chart below:

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\(^{19}\) Ibid.

\(^{20}\) Ibid.
The United States also recommends that individuals have a choice to privatize their
pension funds. Once a citizen enters the workforce, they should be allowed to decide whether to
contribute to pension funds through taxation, or privately invest. In the last decade, many
member states have expanded the role of existing private schemes or introduced new elements of
privately funded pensions into their pension system\textsuperscript{21}. However, the United States encourages the
implementation of this policy uniformly to all member states in the E.U.

\textbf{Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership}

The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) is a proposed free trade
agreement between the United States and the European Union. Talks on this treaty are currently
ongoing, but no significant progress has been made. While tariffs between the U.S. and the E.U.
are low - on average around 3% - there are significant non-tariff barriers to trade.\textsuperscript{22} These include
diverging regulatory structures, elimination of which by some estimates account for 80% of
potential economic gains\textsuperscript{23}. Both the U.S and the E.U. should work to reconcile these regulatory
differences in order to realize the economic gains that free trade will bring. Similar treaties
already exist between Mexico and the EU, with proposed talks between Canada and the EU, so
an agreement of this type is certainly feasible.

The TTIP should be implemented as soon as possible, as the economic benefits to both
parties are immense. Estimates vary, but consensus has emerged that it would result in a GDP
increase of at least 2\% for each party. Many of the countries that have been hardest hit by the
global financial crisis will especially benefit; for example, treaty implementation is estimated to
increase the per-capita income in Spain is by 6.6\%. Additionally, it is predicted that U.S. trade
with Greece, Italy, and Portugal will increase by more than 90\%, and 140,000 jobs will be
created in both Italy and Spain.

The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) exemplifies the lasting benefits
free trade agreements can have. After implementation in 1994, U.S. trade increased $60 billion in
six years - reaching $100 billion by 2000. Canada and the U.S exchange approximately $1
billion in goods and services every day. NAFTA resulted in a North American integrated supply
chain and the benefits extend beyond economics. Increased social and political interaction
between Mexico and the other NAFTA signatories has helped alleviate political corruption in
Mexico. Additionally, stronger economic relationships can lead to stronger security
relationships, as exemplified by the the increased transnational border security between Canada
and the U.S. Such as the Smart Border Accord and the Beyond the Border Initiative.

\textsuperscript{22} “Come on, TTIP: A good idea in the state-of-the-union address, that business should rush to support” The

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Given our partners in NAFTA have already established or expressed interest in free trade agreements with the EU, it is only natural that an agreement such as TTIP be ratified. The benefits seen as a results of NAFTA could be achieved on a much larger scale if these economies, which account for 40% of the world’s GDP, reduce barriers to trade.

The proposed TTIP agreement would help European Union mitigate its changing demographics problems by increasing tax revenues, boosting worker productivity, and controlling emigration from Southern and Central European countries. As has been documented, the demographic trends in Europe are not favorable for long-term economic growth. Even Europe’s economic powerhouse, Germany, will not be exempt from this problem. Germany’s fertility levels have been below the replacement rate (~2.1%) for the last 30 years. Consequently, there are more Germans older than 55 than younger than 24, its labor force fell by 70,000 last year, and by 2050 Germany’s population will have decreased by 12 million. This significant decrease in labor force will have adverse effects on the long-term performance.

As previously mentioned, the TTIP is estimated to add at least 2% to the EU GDP. This significant amount of growth leads to increased tax revenue for governments. As expected, this will aid in alleviating the pressures that an increasingly elderly population will place on social welfare and pension programs. In addition, an extremely valuable benefit of passing the TTIP will be an increase in worker productivity. A study by the University of Nevada, Reno found the following: “With regards to trade openness, our results indicate that, relative to the overall economy… skilled labor intensive industries benefit relatively more from trade than unskilled intensive industries in terms of productivity. Given that labor productivity is a good proxy for wages; our findings support the conclusion that increased trade is an important source of increase in wages of skilled labor relative to unskilled labor.” Increased productivity of skilled labor is vital since it will help mitigate the potential labor shortages. Lastly, economists estimate that the TTIP will increase employment and wages in struggling Southern and Central European countries. For example, US trade with Greece, Italy, and Portugal, could increase by more than 90% than current levels. Implementation of TTIP would therefore add 140,000 jobs in Spain and Italy. It would also, as predicted by the University of Nevada paper, increase wages by 6.6% in Spain. Overall, these effects diminish the incentives for workers from the PIGS countries to emigrate to more economically competitive countries. This, in turn, would reduce brain drain and stabilize the labor force in struggling economies.

28 Portugal, Italy, Greece, Spain (PIGS)
Recommendations

Regarding the European Union, the United States would like to recommend the following policy proposals. First and foremost, we recognize and stress the importance of a Union-wide common immigration policy to mitigate the stresses that mass immigration can cause while also working as a mediating power to affect change across the continent. Additionally, since any immigrant will be able to apply for a Schengen visa to work in any of the member states, it is rational that the European Union also synchronize its immigration stance.

Once allowed into the EU, it is important that immigrants integrate into their host country’s society while also maintaining their traditional culture. In this context, we want to highlight that host countries need to integrate immigrants through education system based on the language and culture of the host country. Furthermore, the cultural diversity allowing immigrants to practice their traditions and language in private life and promoting acceptance of different cultures among native populations. Unified pension reform with partial privatization of pension funds and incentives to retire later will also be central to this endeavor.

Lastly, the creation of Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership will boost the economies of all nations within the EU. Through free trade with the United States as well as their trading partners Mexico and Canada, the productivity of skilled workers will increase and the burden of an aging population will be relieved. Struggling nations such as Spain, Italy and Greece will also benefit. Increasing employment opportunities as a result of a boosted GDP will relieve many internal societal tensions.
The Future of Force and Faith: World Religions and Global Power

November 2, 2013

The Religion and Politics Roundtable:

- Student Conference on United States Affairs 65, West Point, NY

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Matthew Rohrback, Roundtable Discussion Leader, United States Military Academy
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Introduction

In 2000, the public school system of Modesto, California, embarked on a new curriculum designed to promote religious tolerance. Modesto is referred to by some as “California’s Bible Belt,” alluding to the large percentage of conservative Christians living in the area. However, the district has become home to a growing population of Buddhists, Muslims, Hindus, and Sikhs. To prevent the city from being divided by religious intolerance, the school board mandated that all ninth grade students in the district take a course on world religions. The board reached out to local religious communities so that the courses’ instructors could learn about the various religions not only from priests, but also from rabbis, imams, and other religious leaders. Parents were initially skeptical of the curriculum, and they were worried that exposing their children to other religions would lead them away from the religion that they had grown up with. To quell parental discontent, the school brought in Charles Haynes from the First Amendment Center in Virginia. He framed the course as teaching the students about other religions, rather than teaching students the ways of other religions in order to indoctrinate them into other faiths.

The events of September 11 threatened to derail the progress, as reports of schoolyard violence against Muslim and even Sikh students sprung up across the nation. The teachers were very careful in explaining the difference between the extremist beliefs of the 9/11 attackers and the actual teachings of the Islamic faith. As a result, during the 2001-2002 school year there were no reported instances of anti-Muslim bullying in the Modesto public schools.

A report on the program seven years after its implementation revealed that not only did the students feel “a greater tolerance” for other religions, but also there was no indication that the course led students away from their family’s religion. Modesto can serve as an example to the rest of the country, in that educating students about other faiths, in the presence of a radically changing religious landscape, will make them more religiously tolerant. As the United States becomes increasingly religiously diverse, a more comprehensive set of national policies, focused on implementing a media campaign, facilitating new cooperation between private and public institutions, and reforming the public school system’s curriculum will help unite and strengthen communities and will cause a tremendous shift in confronting religious biases.  

Religious Studies in Public Schools

Religious conflicts within the United States can be linked back to shortcomings of the American educational system in, both public and private, in that many Americans are not well-versed in the beliefs of religions other than their own. Changing religious demographics only serve to exacerbate this concern. As a result, our policy statement finds it necessary to address the U.S. Department of Education on the matter of introducing a requirement of religious and cultural awareness into its curriculum at all levels of its public schools. Our recommendations.

can be summed up in the following two-track education policy that would implement further cultural and religious awareness among American students. The first track would include a reaching out to educational systems across the globe in cooperation with existing American institutions to expand avenues of collaboration between countries. The second track is pertinent to the current domestic social studies curricula of U.S. public schools. Our model suggests effecting more positive changes to the present curricula designs to better promote cultural and religious sensitivity.

Without teachers who are educated in the religions and cultures of the world, we cannot implement a successful program in religious and cultural studies in U.S. public schools. Ideally speaking, we would provide self-sufficient American teaching personnel for this new curriculum component of religious and cultural studies. This is why we suggest creating an exchange program for American social studies teachers. Our suggested model entails collaborating with trainers on interfaith and intercultural dialogue. This will function effectively by sending off American public school teachers to target countries that best represent different faiths and having them undergo Train The Trainer (TTT) funded by both the Department of State and the Department of Education for at least a year.

These delegate teachers will have the chance to actually live and integrate on a daily basis with the natives practicing their faiths. The same program will fund a native trainer from the target host-country to teach at an American public school while his or her American counterpart is receiving the training overseas. By replicating the same model nationwide for a period of two to three years, an American personnel of expert teachers of interfaith dialogue will be available at every American public school. This will achieve the aim of this model by providing a self-sufficient, highly qualified American teaching staff on different global faiths. These teachers could then train their colleagues on interfaith cooperation, thereby multiplying the effects of the program.

Additionally, we suggest that the Department of Education design curricula for elementary, middle, and high school students in which misconceptions and stereotypes of other faiths and cultures are resolved through the careful study of the history and tenets of all major world religions. Through using this pedagogy of religious and cultural pluralism, these curricula would create an interfaith and intercultural dialogue amongst the public school students of the United States.

At the elementary school level, a Cultural Awareness Component should be implemented so that students are exposed to the existence of religions and cultures other than their own. The acknowledgement and celebration of different religious holidays through reading children’s stories, playing games, making crafts, and other activities is one way of providing an accessible way for the children to engage in the interfaith community. For example, a Muslim student’s parent could volunteer to come into the classroom and teach the children about Ramadan, and then lead a class activity by making traditional food eaten by Muslims during this month of fasting.
Middle school is a critical period of learning for many students, who often fall prey to using stereotypes and prejudices to describe people of unfamiliar religions or ethnicities. This is why we recommend that the Department of Education should mandate the study of religions and their surrounding culture in a minimum of one unit of study in a pre-established world history course, which can be implemented in any and all middle school grades.

In high schools, this requirement for the study of religion and culture can be advanced through the introduction of an entire elective course in religious studies that is offered through the school’s social studies departments. However, an emphasis on religious and cultural differences should still be implemented in the required world history courses for all high school students.

Schools can also use technology to educate students on culture and religion. By providing access to these research projects, students will have the ability to educate themselves on a wider range of topics. More specifically, students will be able to post their research on blogs or Wikis, which will then be accessed by other students.

Creating an inclusive classroom environment is crucial to promoting cultural and religious awareness. It is important that students understand the different backgrounds of their classmates. By doing so, it can close boundaries that separate students from one another. Encouraging students from diverse religious backgrounds to write monthly journals describing their religions can facilitate the creation of an inclusive classroom ambience. These journals may provide students with the opportunity to expand their perspectives of different religions and cultures.

**Public and Private Partnerships**

To address the partnership of public and private groups, we propose two areas of focus: cultural exchange, and outreach for students and the general public. In order to create an environment of cultural exchange, we will emphasize language programs that begin at an elementary school level, and change and expand the language curriculum. Some ways to do this are to increase the number of languages a student takes through their primary school in order to increase their cultural awareness and language fluency. The reason we want to start at the primary level is to eliminate any chance for a child to develop a skewed opinion of cultures outside of their own. Another option is to increase the number of classes a student takes in a single language throughout primary school to become bilingual.

Learning another language will allow the child to develop their cultural awareness and broaden the child’s view on the world. For the children who develop a strong foreign language ability, we will create a summer exchange program for middle and high school students. American students will travel abroad at a young age and fully integrate themselves into a foreign culture for the summer. Also, we will allow for foreign students from many cultures and religions to come to America and live within a household with an American family for the summer. Programs such as these will not only develop the child’s understanding of outside
cultures, but it will also allow for better relationships throughout the global world in terms of cultural awareness and religion.

In turn, as foreign students come to the U.S., they will foster cultural awareness with their host family. In addition to summer exchange programs, we propose that academic exchange programs be supported through grants to allow more students to travel abroad on scholarships. Students who enjoy success in these academic exchange programs will also be eligible for scholarships to foreign universities. If we allow students to gain access to foreign colleges through the use of scholarships, it will increase relations on an international scale. Relationships between foreign colleges and the US government will be beneficial to both parties, and allow for our economies to intermingle as well as our education systems. Finally, these programs will be brought to regions within the U.S. with populations that have historically lacked the opportunity to travel abroad.

To address the public we propose several forms of cultural exchange and media outreach to appeal for a more pluralistic society. First we propose that NGO’s, media companies, and multi-national corporations receive grants from the government in order to promote and create positive non-threatening awareness for a pluralistic, multicultural society. In particular, these groups will help US citizens understand the importance of a religiously and culturally diverse society. This will be accomplished through the use of multiple mediums to include social media, public broadcasting, and advertisement. One example is to use social media to replicate the viral affects of other public awareness campaigns such as Kony 2012. Another example which used public broadcasting is the popular TV show, “School House Rock” which used music and cartoons to teach elementary age children about various academic topics.

Carrots and Sticks

Through financial inducements and penalties, the United States can respond to growing religious concerns affecting demographics currently in the United States. According to Pew Forum metrics, 78.4% of Christians make up the United States population with 16.1% reporting unaffiliated and 4.7% reporting other religions. Looking at the Muslim demographic as a case study 0.6% of the United States is made up of Muslim immigrants or refugees. The Muslim demographic is interesting because Muslim citizens make up the largest group within the United States population with more than three children living in the home. Muslim immigrants displaced or immigrated from around the world greatly affect the population demographic domestically and internationally. With the increase in population, and growing divide between religious sects, the United States need to continue improving cultural integration to improve cooperation. The Department of Education gave away roughly $21 billion in grants to improve performance in

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school, while private foundations gave an additional $6.3 billion in grants from 25,639 private donations. There are some concerns for the implementation of this plan.\textsuperscript{32,33}

A major problem in implementing our policy in local schools is its constitutionality. How can the federal government impose cultural awareness standards on schools when education is left to the states under the 10th Amendment? We propose that the federal government threaten to cut federal education funds from states whose schools do not meet these new standards. This is a strategy that the federal government has used before, notably in the case of the national drinking age. Congress, in an effort to combat drunk driving, enacted the National Minimum Drinking Age Act which instituted sanctions against states that did not make 21 the minimum age for purchase of alcohol.\textsuperscript{34} This policy is based on a 1978 Supreme Court decision which upheld federal regulation by way of financial inducements: "It must be remembered that this act is no compulsory on the state…[It] gives to the states an option to enact such legislation and in order to induce that enactment, offers financial assistance."\textsuperscript{35} While in the drinking-age case, as well as in our proposal, the federal government is threatening sanctions, rather than offering inducements, the principle is the same. The federal government provides states with a powerful incentive to accept its guidelines, but it is not mandatory. Thus the constitutional requirement is met.

The government can provide financial incentives as well. To encourage schools to develop cultural awareness programs that produce educated students the Agency will develop a system of grants to assist particular schools in success. Schools that under perform for a period of two subsequent years will be offered a grant to further develop their program. These schools will be expected to develop a proposal to show how their cultural awareness grant will be used to assist in their program development and success rate. These grants will be for a period no longer than three consecutive years. Schools that show a drastic increase in quality during those three consecutive years will be offered an opportunity to receive funds to continue their program for an additional two consecutive years. States will be encouraged to continue investment in these programs by providing increases in funding from federal sources.

Schools that are performing exceptionally will be presented with an award for their excellence. This award will be presented by the Office of the President. The presentation of this award will be done within 180 days of the school's evaluation.

The Agency will develop a Grant to encourage cultural integration. This grant will be known as the Cultural Integration Grant. The Cultural Integration Grant will be sponsored by key


\textsuperscript{35} \textit{Ibid.}, 45.
non-profit organizations. Non-profits will be sought that have an interest in developing programs to assist Cultural Integration. Non-profits that have interests in opposition to Cultural Integration will not be allowed to sponsor a Cultural Integration Grant.

Cultural and religious awareness, at the lowest level, begins with the education of the youth. This helps facilitate the broadening of perspectives on a fundamental level. The United States will provide exchange programs for students who are willing to further advance their education. Educating the public on religious and cultural backgrounds will inevitably impact our foreign policy. Although this serves as a domestic policy, it can set the precedent for other nations to follow. The changing religious landscape in the United States is not an isolated case. On the contrary, such changes are occurring on the international level. It is our hope that these domestic policies will help legitimize an international dialogue in which the United States will encourage allied nations to implement similar policy reforms aimed at positively and productively addressing this changing landscape.
The Omnivore’s Security Dilemma: Accessibility, Availability, Use, and Quality

November 2, 2013

The Food and Water Security Round Table:

- Student Conference on United States Affairs 65, West Point, NY

Muna Baig, Columbia University
Jacob Barrios, University of Texas at Austin
Casey Batley, US Military Academy
Zachary Bowers, US Military Academy
Matthew Choi, Skidmore College
Frances Gourdie, Columbia University
Andrew Gregory, University of Pennsylvania
Robby Hume, US Military Academy
Henry Johnson, Claremont McKenna College
Courtney Kral, Ohio University
Andrew Lee, US Military Academy
Mary Mackie, University of Connecticut
Owen Marks, Sarah Lawrence College
Colleen McLoughlin, University of Hartford
Veronic Salas, Claremont McKenna College
Katie Spoden, College of Saint Benedict and Saint John’s University
Ian Thomas, Middlebury College
Annabelle Wilmott, Saint Louis University

Dr. Amy Krakowka, Co-Chair
David Bargueño, Co-Chair

Erin Mauldin, Roundtable Discussion Leader, US Military Academy
Casey Batley, Roundtable Scribe, US Military Academy
What is food and water security? We define it as equitable access to and availability of sustainable, high-quality food and water. This encompasses the equal distribution of resources and power and also addresses cultural differences that contribute to how food and water is distribution. Why does this matter? Not only are people starving to death and suffering from extremely limited access to water, but climate change is restricting the amount of available arable land and clean water we have left. Policies need to be implemented now to improve national and global food security before the scarcity of these resources is irrevocable. Two main problems with current food and water security policies are than 1) they do not always reach the populations they are intended to help, 2) they are not sustainable, 3) the problems are not commonly understood, and 4) they do not involve actors from all areas that the solution encompasses. Hence, our policy proposal addresses equality, sustainability, education and public diplomacy. We are writing to the Departments of State, Energy, Health, Agriculture, Commerce, the Interior and Education to propose multiple policy changes that could increase food and water security for the U.S. and around the globe.

Access to clean water and nutritional food is quite limited in a lot of parts of the world. The current model of food and water distribution that stems from foreign aid to developing countries is not reaching those who need it most. Many government agency activities are characterized by fragmented and overlapping allocations of power. As President Obama pointed out in his 2011 State of Union address, “The Interior Department is in charge of salmon while they’re in fresh water, but the Commerce Department handles them when they’re in saltwater. I hear it gets even more complicated when they’re smoked.” Two organizations in particular, Power Africa and the G8 New Alliance for Food and Security and Nutrition, have overlapping goals and initiatives. Due to lack of communication, they operate separately when they could be much more effective by working together. With so many actors involved in the distribution of food and water, it is essential that they work together.

Therefore, we propose policies that foster partnerships between such organizations in order to improve infrastructure development and social equity. Increasing coordination in the researching, planning and implementing stages would improve consistency of policy. It would also allow resources to be shared so that more resources can be devoted to the quality of the food. Local government agencies, engineers and experts in infrastructure development would cooperate with private organizations and businesses to prepare and implement a more efficient food and water distribution process in communities. Even further coordination – involving transnational companies, business corporations and non-governmental organizations – would establish distribution networks that would much more effectively provide resources to people who do not currently have access to them. One apparent drawback of this plan is that it relies on the cooperation of individual organizations. However, the Department of Commerce can lead the way in regulating transparency, accountability and allocating the funds received from multiple

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sources. Not only would this policy make food and water distribution more efficient, but it would minimize barriers between public and private organizations.

Transnational cooperation is also essential for improving the availability of food and water across the globe. The need for improved food and water security is vast, and one solution to this problem is relatively simple. Currently a Global Food Security Index (GFSI), created in 2012 by the The Economist Intelligence Unit and funded by DuPont, measures by country affordability, availability, quality and safety of food in each country. It rates each country based on “best performance”, “good performance”, “moderate performance”, and “needs improvement”.\(^{37}\) It does not, however, take into account 1) physical waste, 2) economic costs of waste, 3) supply over demand, 4) disparities among the food security of citizens, and 5) how many resources each country allocates toward climate change mitigation. The gaps in this index make it appear as though developed countries such as the U.S. and European nations have the highest food security rating when they are the ones who waste the most and therefore are undermining food security for the rest of the world and for future generations. China is also listed as “best performance” while many residents are food and water insecure. The current GFSI also fails to account for the impact climate change has on the amount of arable land available and the conditions in which food is grown. Furthermore, there is no current water security index in place. Hence, we propose to add upon the current GFSI and create a Global Water Security Index (GWSI).

We propose to add to the GFSI: 1) the amount of food each country wastes, 2) the economic cost each country’s food waste imposes on the world, 3) the supply compared to the demand, 4) the measure of domestic food security disparity, and 5) the percentage of government spending that is spent toward climate change adaptation and mitigation. Table 1 outlines how the new components would be addressed. The same would apply to the GWSI. Also, the measurements would be in numbers rather than vague ratings such as “best performance” or “needs improvement” in order to show the extreme differences between the food and water security between countries. Adding these components to the index would make public the true food insecurities of each country and provide incentives for countries to lower their index rating. The potentially false notion that any given country is very secure in terms of food and water attracts investments in and trade with said country. Once these new components are exposed, we believe both investors and the global market will reconsider their investing and trading patterns respectively. Once fear is promulgated that the food- and water-insecure countries will run out of arable land and/or clean water based on more demand than supply or failure to adapt to climate change, among various other reasons, people will not want to invest in or trade with that country. This in and of itself will incentivize countries to lower their GFSI and GWSI in order to maintain a powerful position in the global economy. For example, one in four children in America live “without consistent access to enough nutritious food to live a healthy life” and yet the U.S. is

listed as “best performance” on the current GFSI.\textsuperscript{38} Therefore, the U.S. does not have much incentive to change. Making the changes we propose to the GFSI and adding a GWSI would provide a more comprehensive rating for each country that would encourage them to improve their food and water security.

The resources needed are quite accessible. The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) has a delegate in every country across the world. These specialists have already worked to gather information in order to create the GFSI in 2012. U.S. State Department employees could also be involved in this. Environmental Science and Technology officers in particular are skilled in collecting data on food and water security all over the world. Also, hosts of embassies across the globe who are involved in human rights issues could be involved in the data collection as well as publicizing the information once it is available. In terms of funding, DuPont was the one who sponsored the original index and would most likely be on board for improving upon it. Other large multi-national companies such as Coca-Cola might also be willing to sponsor this initiative because they are highly interested in improving water security around the world. The World Bank may also contribute or at least support the data collection and publicizing the information more efficiently.

Educational awareness can also incentivize people to improve their food and water use. With the rise of a middle class outside America, more and more people will desire the irresponsible, unsustainable water consumption rates currently practiced by many Americans today. The primary domestic actors involved in the unsustainable use of food and water are the agriculture sector, industry, and individuals. Our policy must first determine a concrete plan for changing domestic use of food and water before the model can be exported to growing middle classes abroad. Policy must target unsustainable food and water practices directly, but also incentivize a broader movement away from wasteful cultural norms. The goal is to educate consumers to move towards more sustainable practices, sold on health, cost, and sustainability benefits.

Thus, we propose a panel of experts from industry, science, health, and education, appointed by executive officials, to set standards of sustainable production and consumption. This panel could be modeled after the UN Working Group for Sustainable Development Goals, although with US interest and expertise at the forefront.\textsuperscript{39} We recommend the Department of Health and the FDA take these standards and work to have them reflected in consumer products, making it obvious to consumers which products meet these standards and which ones do not. By publicizing the amount of waste of food and water that is involved in the production of multiple goods, users will be more likely to change wasteful consumption habits. It requires two thousand


gallons of water to produce one pound of beef, for example.\textsuperscript{40} Not many people know this, and we believe if they did they might, over the long-term, try to change eating habits, at least among those who have the ability to do this financially. Regulations could also be put into place that rank food based on their production efficiency, similar to how the GFSI and GWSI rank countries based on their food and water security.

We also would like to encourage the Departments of Health and Education to cultivate a partnership with non-profits like Teach for America, and interested state governments with the intent of launching a pilot program on nutrition and the environmental impacts of common agricultural practices. The aim of this pilot program would be to enhance awareness among young consumers about the health and environmental risks associated with irresponsible food and water use. Challenges facing our policy include the perception that it hurts enterprise, and that it amounts to executive regulation of business. Moreover the political economy situation remains inhospitable to affairs not regarding the economy or healthcare. The first issue can be addressed by highlighting that the published sustainability standard is not a punitive measure and exists merely to encourage businesses to strive to meet better consumption practices. The political economy issue can be remedied by making the connection between sustainable food and water practices, less strain on health care, and long-term trade security.\textsuperscript{41}

Assuring equal access, availability and use is not sufficient; policy must also take into consideration the quality of the food and water people consume. Calories need to be available in sufficient quantity and nutritional value, while water should be safe for its intended purpose, whether that be drinking, cleaning, energy production, etc. Contaminated water results in 1.7 billion cases of diarrheal diseases a year. Chronic undernourishment impacts 870 million in the world, while 35.7 percent of Americans are obese.\textsuperscript{42} Domestically, this results in higher health care costs (on the order of $147 billion in 2008) and reduced productivity.\textsuperscript{43} Abroad, lack of quality food and safe water perpetuates poverty and instability in regions important to national interest.

There are gaps in current policy with regards to assuring quality food and water, both domestically and abroad. Current subsidy schemes are problematic, promoting the growth of low-quality calories – and some calories that are not even intended for human consumption – often through the use unsustainable, big farming techniques.\textsuperscript{44} Agricultural attachés in the State Department and the Feed the Future Initiative are both starts in the right direction of fostering sustainable agricultural processes to produce quality crops abroad, but suffer from a top-down


approach that does not sufficiently assure stakeholder buy-in.\textsuperscript{45} Though the Millennium Development Goals for access to water have been met early, 11 percent of the world are still without clean water and over 40 percent lack adequate sanitation.\textsuperscript{46} Well-intentioned projects to address water quality issues abound, but the commitment to see them through is often lacking.\textsuperscript{47}

Therefore, we propose several specific policies to address the issue of quality of food and water at home and abroad. The farm bill currently before Congress needs to be examined by a more diverse group of stakeholders including small farmers and those who practice sustainable agriculture. The approach of State Department agricultural attaches needs to include an explicit commitment to developing local agricultural expertise so that in the long-run, they are only needed in an advisory role. Sustainable community development adapted to local conditions and sensitive to cultural considerations should form the core of the approach to Feed the Future initiatives, rather than large-scale, technological transformations. A commitment to long-term sanitation development is necessary to address the core of water quality issues. The State and Defense Departments have the opportunity to promote long-term partnerships with local communities and NGOs, private corporations, and foundations in order to ensure that development is effective in the long-term.

In the end, no policy can be implemented without strong governance. Luckily, the U.S. has this advantage and therefore could be a strong leader in improving food and water security across the world. At the same time, when the aid that is intended to get to certain populations and does not get there, it is often because of corruption throughout the intermediaries. Therefore, transparency is essential. Open policy holds actors accountable and therefore takes the blame off of the original initiator in case something goes wrong. The disadvantage to this is that transparency more often than not requires even more regulation, so the nation who puts these policies forward may be seen as meddling with other countries’ affairs. This can be solved, however, by stressing U.S. partnership rather than U.S. dominance. Foreign diplomacy is essential, whether it be with national governments, non-governmental organizations, corporations, or other actors. Partnerships and transparency are essential for these policies to be implemented, which is why it is important for human rights activists, EIU specialists and diplomats to be involved because they have experience with international relations. Food and water security can only be ensured with international cooperation.

\textsuperscript{45} There is fear that the search for ‘big ideas’ and ‘agricultural transformations’ in the Feed the Future strategy may result in technological solutions that benefit local populations inequitably, reinforcing unequal power dynamics. \url{http://www.polycymic.com/articles/1998/u-s-international-development-plans-hurting-feed-the-future-s-policy-initiatives} and \url{https://www.commondreams.org/view/2010/09/15-1}.

\textsuperscript{46} \url{United Nations}, accessed Nov. 1, 2013, \url{www.unwater.org/statistics}.

Forever Young: India’s Demographic Dividend
November 2, 2013

The India Roundtable:
  ❖ Student Conference on United States Affairs 65, West Point, NY

Hyacinthe Nare, Yale University
Hanna Homestead, University of Wisconsin
Alex Davis, University of Chicago
Jesina Muvekwa, Skidmore College
Jeremy Kaplitt, Bard College
Evan Harkins, United States Military Academy
Emma Moore, Brown University
Claire Bens, University of Ohio
Omar Rana, City University of New York
Alison Weiss, United States Air Force Academy
Kristina Wienke, State University of New York at Albany
Zach Jonas, Union College

Dhruva Jaishankar, Co-Chair
Dr. Jon Dorschner, Co-Chair

Ahmad Nasir, Roundtable Discussion Leader, United States Military Academy
Evan Gunn, Roundtable Scribe, United States Military Academy
Introduction

As India’s already large population continues to increase, changes in education are crucial to harness a successful demographic dividend. However, there is also potential for India’s population explosion to become a serious liability. India suffers from a subpar literacy rate of 61% while only one Indian university competes for a top 500 rank by most measures. Additionally, the youth (15-24 years old) literacy rate is 88% for males and 74% for females. These issues are a substantial hindrance to national economic growth and security.  

The United States has critical economic and political interests in India including maintenance of regional stability, democracy promotion, counterterrorism strategy, and nuclear nonproliferation. As the world’s largest democracy and the clear leading power in South Asia, India is a natural partner for the U.S. Furthermore, India’s role as the second largest contributor to the U.S foreign student population (13.1% of U.S foreign students in 2012) makes cooperation on tertiary education a uniquely fruitful opportunity for both countries. In India, increases in vocationally educated adults may result in increased economic prosperity through supply of semi-skilled labor.

This paper begins with a framework of analysis discussing “demography is destiny” and demography as opportunity. Next, using the theoretical ideas from this structure we will analyze the Indian education system. In doing so, we will provide a series of policy recommendations for both the United States and India.

Framework of Analysis

There are two distinct theories about how demography affects economic growth. The first is the “demography is destiny” approach, which posits that although population growth is initially harmful to economic prosperity, eventually population growth and shifting age structures inevitably improve the productive capacity of the economy on a per-capita basis. There are four key assumptions that underlie the “demography is destiny” approach “demography is destiny”: (1) Population growth eventually increases the labor force. (2) States will divert resources from initial investment in children to investing in job training and technological innovation. (3) Rising female participation in the work force is accompanied by a

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49 “India,” UNICEF.
decline in fertility rates. (4) Anticipation of population aging promotes increased capital accumulation and personal savings.\textsuperscript{53}

The second theoretical approach does not take as a given the four assumptions of the “demography is destiny” approach. In particular it holds that the demographic dividend is inextricably linked to three factors: good governance, a stable policy environment, and a carefully constructed trade policy.\textsuperscript{54} The absence of one of these variables significantly reduces the economic dividend, and results in a government burdened by the rising costs of providing for an increasing number of poor and unemployed dependents.\textsuperscript{55} Similarly, demographic disparity can destabilize the political system, and cause considerable social unrest.\textsuperscript{56} For this approach, demography represents an opportunity not a destiny for economic prosperity.

The “demography is destiny” approach towards Indian development is significantly problematic. K.S James makes a compelling argument that both educational deficits and considerable unemployment and underemployment in different Indian regions undermine the core assumptions needed for an economic dividend. In particular he argues that extremely high illiteracy rates, lack of preparation for the modern economy, and female unemployment problematize the government’s project for finding employment for its huge adult population.\textsuperscript{57} As a result Indian policy will determine whether or not changing demographics are a boon or a drag on economic development.

India’s large youth population presents a potential opportunity for positively affecting economic and quality of life changes across the subcontinent. Over the next ten years, India will add 9 million people annually to its work force it currently has 600 million people of working age and by 2030, India will have a median age of 31-32 years, remaining a country with a significant youthful population. This provides a temporary potential demographic advantage on which India – and the United States – could capitalize. This age advantage could increase India’s GDP 2% per capita.

Education is the vehicle with which to utilize the large youth bulge. In the next 20 years, India’s high school educated population will increase 80% from 360 million to 660 million. An important focus is investment in education and training. This includes education for females and males, for all castes and income levels, and vocational training. An estimated 25% of all information technology graduates are employable, indicating the need for technical and vocational skills that can be readily applicable. Similarly, 56% of engineering graduates lack cognitive skills and soft skills. The main actor in demographic change is this youth population, within which women are a critical group.

\textsuperscript{53} ibid, 4 and Wolf, Charles Jr., Siddhartha Dalal, Julie DaVanzo, Eric V. Larson, Alisher Akhmedjonov, Harun Dogo, Mei Linda Huang, Silvia Montoya. “China and India, 2025: A Comparative Assessment.” National Defense Research Institute 22,24
\textsuperscript{54} K.S James 578 and Rand 23
\textsuperscript{55} James 580
\textsuperscript{56} Ibid 579
The education of women proves to be a major factor in influencing the fertility rate. The national birth rate is currently 2.6 births per woman per lifetime, still above replacement level. Similarly, India’s fertility rate has declined from 6 children per woman to 2.7 between the 1950s and today with a comparative 70% decline in the infant mortality rate. The projected increase in population will change the population’s composition. India’s sex ratio at birth is 1.12 males for each female, which has led to a 7.1 million deficit of females in 2011. Statistics, show a decrease in the birth-sex ratio among mothers with 10 or more years of education compared with mothers with no education. This imbalanced sex ratio makes the provision of jobs more important for ensuring a safer society.

Policy Proposal

The Indian youth bulge is an underserved demographic that has been largely excluded from educational opportunities. The Indian educational system also struggles to accommodate basic technical fields. As a result, India has a lack of technical and vocational workers such as agriculture extension agents, nurses, electricians, mechanics and repairmen.

Establishing a system of community colleges and vocational training institutes similar to that of the United States will ameliorate both the issue of unemployment and the education gap between skilled and low-skilled workers. The system could create employment opportunities for youth, increase economic mobility, fulfill the need for semi-skilled workers and contribute to economic growth. In addition, there are far-reaching effects of improved and expanded technical education. These include improvements in agricultural productivity, public health, female participation in the labor force, infrastructural development and maintenance, and political stability. Subsequently, these developments increase the economic, social, and political vitality of India.

This program will build community colleges in Indian states and provide training and resources to both staff and students. It will be funded through joint cooperation between the United States and Indian governments, the Indian private sector, and various non-governmental organizations. Ideally, American funding will be matched by the Indian government which could be sourced through linkages with the private sector. U.S. funding will be provided for a 10 year period contingent on the review of the first 3 graduating classes.

The system will be tiered with joint central and state oversight. Ultimate responsibility for the program will rest with the Indian central government and Indian academics. American advisors and educators will provide insight and help the central government develop the program. The central board will oversee state boards which evaluate the needs of each state and are responsible for their execution at the local level. This arrangement will allow the states some degree of agency while maintaining a consistent national direction.

This policy conforms to the assumptions above about the demographic dividend regarding the potential benefits of India’s high fertility rates.
Lula’s Legacy: Brazil’s Rise and South America’s Future

November 2, 2013

The Latin America Roundtable:

- Student Conference on United States Affairs 65, West Point, NY
  Jorge Bustillos, New York University, University of Carabobo
  Brianna Cole, University of New Hampshire
  Austin Eighan, College of Saint Benedict and Saint John’s University
  Sean Finney, United States Naval Academy
  Wilson Gibbons, Skidmore College
  Gloriana Gonzalez, Stephen F. Austin State University
  John Humphrey, Hanover College, Federal University of Bahía
  Alfredo Malaret, Fairleigh Dickinson University
  Alexander Paraskeva, City University of New York
  Leanne Rempel, Pepperdine University
  Vianna Reyes, Farmingdale State College
  Austin Semmel, United States Military Academy
  Jacob Severn, United States Military Academy
  Ashleigh Uhler, Pennsylvania State University

Nick Franklin, Co-Chair
Tom Walsh, Co-Chair

Francis Ambrogio, Roundtable Discussion Leader, United States Military Academy
Cyrus Cappo, Roundtable Scribe, United States Military Academy
Today, Brazil is a growing economic power in South America and the world. At the turn of the 21st century, Luis Ignacio (Lula) Da Silva’s administration pursued economic development policies. His pursuit focused on multilateral strategies with other developing economies and the creation of a basis for social protection for people in lower economic standing. A key component of Lula’s leadership has been to create a more unified South America through economic integration. At the regional level, Lula desired to establish Brazil as a hegemonic actor with aspirations for greater global influence. The United States wants to strengthen the bilateral relationship between Brazil and the U.S. A proposed renovation of the Brazil’s current domestic tax policy and infrastructure to aid in Brazil’s rise as a power in South America. By encouraging foreign investment, especially from the U.S., all economies involved will benefit. In regards to security, a stronger relationship would help both countries combat violent domestic and international forces.

Demographics

The socioeconomic improvements have stretched across demographics, leading to vast improvements to the middle class. In the last eight years almost forty million Brazilians have been incorporated into this socioeconomic group. Brazil has experienced economic growth and inequality reduction. Since Lula’s rise to power, the Gini Index has dropped from being 0.64 in 2001, to 0.56 in 2012. His policies have brought the country closer to an equal wealth distribution. Individuals have felt this effect in the household with an increase in GDP per capita from $3,085 in 2003, to $12,788 in 2011.

Lula instituted a program that compensates parents for the projected income lost by sending children to school full time instead of work. Bolsa Familia has boosted socioeconomic conditions and has had a positive influence on the nation’s well being. Such social programs were implemented to improve education and public health. The country has a high concentration of young people, over 20 million children ages 5-19. Lula’s predecessor, Cardoso, understood the importance of investing in the education system to prepare this demographic to enter the workforce. More importantly, Cardoso opened Brazilian markets for private investment corporations, business, and entrepreneurship. Lula continued the sound investment and developmental policies to further Brazilian economic boom. Brazil, under Lula’s mentee, Dilma Rouseff, continued to deepen investment in the policies started through Cardoso to envision a decrease in economic disparity. The promotion of education and public health continues to be a leading factor in Brazilian development.

Lula’s effervescent personality, combined with his former role as a union leader, appealed to the Brazilian electorate. His prestige not only helped him connect with Brazilians but allowed a multitude of the Brazilian populace to accept his progressive social policies. His pragmatism and willingness to combine common sense economics with a strong social safety net facilitated the creation of a broad based coalition, which later helped to cement his legacy as the defining actor in contemporary Brazilian governance. His political impact has been so well regarded that
Brazilians decided to elect Dilma Rousseff to power in 2008, emphasizing a national mandate in favor of political continuity rather than upheaval. It is important to note, however, that at times Lula’s ambition to create a utopian redistributive society was curbed by political constraints in the form of an inefficient, corrupt bureaucracy and Lula’s factitious coalition government.

Perhaps Lula’s most prominent area of influence was in the social sphere of Brazilian society. His social policies synthesized and streamlined aspects of Cardoso’s already established attempts at a comprehensive social safety net. Lula successfully renamed and nationalized policies known as Fome-Zero and Bolsa Familia. The ultimate goal of these policy platforms were to reduce unemployment, increase GDP per capita, and raise the poorest sectors of Brazilian society out of squalor. Additionally, Lula’s policies created more widespread access to basic amenities such as sewage systems, readily available clean water, and basic consumer products. Lula also placed a great emphasis on education, and as a result the average length of Brazilian education increased dramatically under his two administrations. Over 70 percent of Brazilian children now finish secondary education. Brazil’s domestic policies have allowed their Foreign Service officials to speak with greater authority in global debates on economic development and poverty.

The most important aspect of Lula’s legacy, in regards to the economic sphere, was the creation and growth of a middle class, which continues to groundbreaking in South America. In various manners, Lula’s economic policies and attempted reforms were informed by the previous administration of President Cardoso. These economic policies were characterized by attempts at privatization and less pervasive state intervention in the economy. The summation of his policies resulted in sustained economic growth and the emergence of Brazil into a dynamic, powerful, developing nation.

**Economics**

It’s time for Brazil to open its doors to foreign investment. Government sanctioned investment is not sufficient to fund the major infrastructure problems that Brazil faces. Brazil spends a mere 1.5% of GDP on infrastructure compared to the world average of 3.8%, and in order to increase the fluidity of liquidity, labor, and capital. To bridge the gap between Brazil’s under-investment in infrastructure, foreign assistance, i.e. foreign direct investment, would not only help boost the Brazilian market economy, but also build up the infrastructure required to transport goods within Brazil. Currently, however, the system for foreign countries to invest in Brazilian infrastructure is overly complex and does not attract the necessary funds for a state-wide remodeling of
key ports, railroads, highways, and airports. Foreign and domestic investors would benefit greatly from decreased barriers to entry into the market and a simplified Brazilian tax code.

In Brazil, on average, it takes 119 days to process the necessary paperwork to open a business compared to the states in the OECD, in which it takes around 12. As seen in Figure 1, this discrepancy is the cost of doing business is a major impediment and cause of reluctant investment. Moreover, already-formed businesses spend nearly 14 times as many hours to pay their taxes compared to their OECD counterparts. Reform of Brazilian tax code is needed in order to bridge the gap between the demand for foreign investors to gain entrance into the Brazilian economy and the push back from the Brazilian market. One of the major obstacles in the path of further bilateral economic cooperation include the tariffs on importing foreign produced goods and exporting domestically made goods, made from international companies. Encouraging the modernization and streamlining of Brazilian markets will further bilateral economic relations between the U.S. and Brazil.

Once a reformed Brazilian tax code is put into place to facilitate the movement of capital and liquidity into the Brazilian market, U.S. foreign direct investment will then able to aid in the enhancement of the existing infrastructure. While repairing and developing the infrastructure of Brazil, U.S. construction expertise will also improve the solid basis upon which a strong foundation for the internationally driven Brazilian economy can be reinvigorated. In the case of transnational oil businesses requiring capital such as the resources needed to construct oil platforms off of the eastern coast of Brazil, a strong infrastructural foundation is first needed. In order to transport the materials required for these projects, roads, airports, and harbors must be modernized to properly support the flow of this capital. The purpose of restructuring Brazilian tax regulations is to encourage foreign investors and firms to bring their business into Brazil. This direct investment put into the Brazil directly benefits its economy and GDP and also increases the amount of bilateral trade between the U.S. and Brazil.

As a primary example of an area in which the Brazilian economy can directly benefit from U.S. direct foreign investment, the engineering, construction, and maintenance of nuclear reactors is seen as a key issue of collaboration. The transfer of American skilled labor to the Brazilian market in order to support and teach Brazilian engineers and architects how to properly construct a nuclear reactor fills the gap of knowledge presented by the lack of qualified Brazilian professionals. The training of local civilians to maintain the reactors also presents the localized economy with an opportunity for growth. Lastly, because the U.S. will provide for the transfer of intelligence required to support the Brazilians in their efforts to further the peaceful use of nuclear power, the Brazilian economy will also profit from the sale of the excess energy produced by such reactors. The transfer of intelligence to spur the growth of civilian nuclear energy in Brazil from the U.S. greatly will only further solidify the trading relationship between the two states.
Although domestic push-back from the Brazilian government may arise in the form of furthering protectionist policies, the benefits greatly outweigh the costs of this bilateral trade. The high tariffs placed on foreign goods entering the Brazilian market put upward pressure on prices. The purpose behind a proposed tax reformation is not to transfer revenue from Brazil to the U.S., but rather, to streamline the taxation process and in turn further encourage transnational companies conduct business in Brazil.

Brazil and the U.S. have a unique opportunity to bolster their individual economies through the continued opening of the Brazilian market. Allowing the U.S. to renovate the infrastructure of Brazil and construct civilian nuclear reactors will not only provide profit for American firms managing the process, but also provide revenue for the Brazilian government and labor through the use of local resources. By observing this trade through the liberal notion of economies, the global economy has here an opportunity to prove that collaboration is not a zero-sum game.

Security

With the rise of Brazil in the world stage, the United States runs the risk of losing a very significant sphere of influence in South America through its multilateral collaboration with other nations. It is beneficial for the United States to maintain a close working partnership with the Brazilian government. One significant key to building stable relationships with Brazil is the United States helping hand in their development of nuclear energy. The United States should work cooperatively with Brazil to develop friendly nuclear relations. This joint effort will allow for greater influence and control of global nuclear development while complying strictly with the regulations set by the International Atomic Energy Agency. Trust is inherent in cooperation.

Brazil and the United States already have successful military-to-military exchanges. Increasing these exchanges will continue to push the relationship in a positive direction. There are numerous ways in which these exchanges can be enhanced. Professional military education is a way in which officers of both nations’ militaries can share their knowledge, experience, and expertise, as well as provide a forum for ethical development for both parties. Academy exchanges of officer cadets also provide a way to highlight the commonalities between the two militaries and to create cohesion through common development. Joint training exercises are currently effective ways that Brazil and the United States cooperate. Continuing and increasing these exercises is paramount to strengthening the bonds between the nations’ militaries.

Furthermore, The United States and Brazil can capitalize concurrently on resource security and law enforcement cooperation. Smuggling, drug trafficking, and human trafficking are serious crimes carried out by transnational criminals and require international cooperation to be fought. Through coordinated efforts by the United States and Brazil, law enforcement agencies and militaries can develop training programs, share technological equipment, and share intelligence that will help fight crime. The two nations have similar contemporary and historical criminal problems, such as drug trafficking, human trafficking, gang violence, smuggling, and border
control. The lessons, tactics, and techniques of these cases of crime-fighting, if shared, will make each nation more capable of stopping criminal activity and will make the hemisphere a safer place.

Brazil and the United States are both nations with vast resources. These resources present tremendous opportunities to the two nations, to the hemisphere, and to the world. The two resources that hold the greatest potential are energy and food. Brazil has an abundance of fertile land in which they grow sugar, soy, and other crops, which can be used for food or to develop ethanol. Additionally, the oil fields in the South Atlantic present the opportunity for the further development of a robust energy sector. Likewise, the United States possesses many potential sources of energy and is already a major food producer. There are great prospects for cooperation in order to alleviate the problem of hunger in the Western Hemisphere. The abundance of energy in the two nations also presents the opportunity to reduce energy-related tensions. These two realms of security are positive ways in which the United States and Brazil are able to cooperate and support not only their own security but regional and world security.

**Institution Building**

The economic opportunities and diplomatic tensions between the US and Brazil mandate an improvement of bilateral relations. We recommend facilitating relations through the creation of a semi-annual summit alternating between national capitals. The summit would cement the creation of a strategic partnership between the two most powerful democracies in the Americas. Crucial to the functioning of this summit is the creation of a clear-cut agenda with defined policy goals that need to be met within a certain time frame. Key actors in government, business, and the military would attend to establish greater policy cohesion in these respective fields and trust between our two nations.

In practice the summit would include separate meetings focusing on the key policy areas mentioned above. In the economic realm the negotiations would center on three main pillars—investment, taxation, and infrastructure. Government and private sector officials would meet to discuss lowering the barriers of entry for businesses, ultimately facilitating freer movement and exchange of goods and services in both countries. Both sides would have to accept terms of a favorable investment treaty so that investments are guaranteed, and there is less risk associated with foreign direct investment in Brazil. Additionally, powerful and entrenched union and labor leaders would be included in the economic series of meetings to provide legitimacy in the eyes of Brazilians, while simultaneously avoiding awkward comparisons to neo-colonial policy.

Central to the security aspect of the summit will be the continuation and expansion of military to military exchanges. This would require a meeting of military academy leaders to coordinate efforts of military instruction and exchange of intelligence. There would also be a meeting of high ranking intelligence officials such as the CIA, NSA, and their Brazilian counterparts regarding coordination of policy in illicit trade including; human trafficking, arms trade, and
narcotics throughout the Americas and beyond. The goal of these meetings would be to establish a statement of intent towards a more collaborative intelligence and military relationship, based on the sharing of key information technology, joint military exercises, and defense equipment.

**Conclusion**

Through economic and security cooperation, the United States hopes to build a strong relationship with Brazil. The demographic transformations that have been happening and still are happening in Brazil indicate a bright future for Brazil. The United States wants to develop a deep understanding between the two states in order to ensure regional, hemispheric, and global prosperity and security. Interaction between nations need not result in a zero-sum game; rather, positive cooperation can, in time, develop a positive relationship.
Coming of Age: Sources of Middle Eastern Instability

November 2, 2013

The Middle Eastern Roundtable:

- Student Conference on United States Affairs 65, West Point, NY

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Isabelle Asakura, Lewis and Clark College
Faisal Bermamet, United States Military Academy
Aaron Beyer, Virginia Cady, Dickinson College
Tiana Cherry, Wittenberg University
Ahmed Eissa, University of Maryland (Baltimore County)
Brian Fitzgerald, Indiana University
John Jacob, Royal Military College of Canada
Numair Khan, New York University
Alexander Kovaka, United States Military Academy
Lily Lousada, Pitzer College
Kaitlin Oujo, Columbia University School of International and Public Affairs
Galina Rudik, Hunter College
McClatchy Ruskin, Claremont McKenna College
Kathryn Scott, Texas A&M University
Christine Sifferman, University of California (Davis)
Alexandra Tirrell, Miami University of Ohio
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Mr. Gregory Aftandilian, Co-Chair
Mr. Steven Brooke, Co-Chair

Luke Schumacher, Roundtable Discussion Leader, United States Military Academy
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Introduction

Several explanations for the sparks and fuel behind the Arab Spring exist. All cite economic policies (or lack thereof) as a significant cause of regional frustration and, in some cases, violent unrest. The demographic youth bulge exacerbates unemployment, cronyism, and lack of economic opportunity. Persons under the age of 25, or “youth,” now comprise about 50-65% of the total Middle East population.¹ Prior to the onset of the 2011 Arab Spring, the Egyptian youth unemployment rate rested at 27.10%, while the rate in Jordan soared to 30.30%. Economic opportunity for the youth has changed little, as Egypt currently wrestles with a 24.8% youth unemployment rate, while Tunisia and Jordan both combat concerning rates at 29.9%.²,³

Significance

Current economic policies cater more to crony capitalism than to equal opportunism. These poor policies create barriers to entry for individuals with ambitions of pursuing business ventures, resulting in high levels of unemployment. Given the high youth demographic, these unemployment rates bear significant weight as they contribute to the propensity towards political uprising out of economic frustration. For this reason, US foreign policy directed towards reforming regime economic policies will most effectively promote stability in the Middle East. These policies should directly address unemployment through job creation measures. The proposal targets low- and mid-level economic development in an attempt to alleviate frustrations with bureaucracy. Reform should target a three-phase timeline, encouraging change in the short, mid and long range.

Instability in the Middle East threatens not only US interests, but the entire global community. It is critical to maintain and protect our regional allies and footholds, ensure stability of the global economic system, and mitigate the potential towards violent extremism, while promoting U.S. ideals in the Middle East.

Short-term solutions-actionable within five years

1. Invest in market-oriented vocational schools

   This proposal will reduce unemployment by matching skills to the market demands and increasing capacity.

2. Invest in infrastructure through business tenders

   We propose that the U.S. Government, through U.S. Foreign Aid, invest in infrastructure in the Middle East through business tenders. Stipulations in these contracts would favor companies that employ and train domestic laborers and management.

3. Create an integrated regional enterprise fund
The United States should create not-for-profit but privately managed funds for the Middle East region. It should invest in small and medium enterprises (SMEs) as well as coordinate private investment throughout the region. This project can functionally be a regional expansion of the Egyptian-American Enterprise Fund model that can issue small business loans to grassroots start-ups in order to stimulate economic growth at the ground level. This will decrease unemployment and facilitate national economic participation.

4. Grant tax incentives for American firms to invest directly in the Middle East

This proposal will provide incentives for U.S. companies to invest in industries across the Middle East North Africa region. American companies may be averse to the idea of developing their businesses in a part of the world with substantial political risk; however, higher investment and economic growth within these societies will reduce political risk and allow American companies to increase profits.

Medium-term solutions – actionable within 5 to 20 years

In the medium term, the United States should pursue the following options in order to combat the issues of unemployment. The implementation of these policies may take longer and should be viewed as an intermediate step with the goal of creating more small businesses and reducing unemployment. These policies are designed to foster a sustainable and autonomous economic environment which will increase regional stability.

5. Allocate more funds to USAID to finance distribution of loans and grants aimed at micro-financing small or start-up businesses.

Local banks will be trained to administer USAID loans according to specific stipulations detailing the process of granting a loan and its application. Applicants have to meet certain criteria to be granted a USAID loan and use it to finance small or start-up businesses. Banks will receive the interest charged on these loans, which will finance more loans and the logistical costs of loan distribution. This provides financial incentive for banks to continue the loan program and makes the loan program sustainable for the future.

6. Fund regional conferences to educate citizens on entrepreneurship and business management

Conferences will be held regionally across the selected country aimed at educating citizens in how to start and manage their own business. Small businesses are key to a sustainable long term economy and these conferences will help initiate an autonomous economic environment. Business management, entrepreneurship, business advertisement, etc., will all be essential educational components to these conferences.

Long Term Solutions – actionable after 20 years

7. Education – Stage forums where Western and Middle Eastern educators can exchange ideas
Mirror education reforms in the West to implement critical thinking skills. The creation of an innovative and self-sustaining business environment will greatly benefit from progressive and adaptive skills that aspiring entrepreneurs can apply in the Middle East.

8. Incentivize construction of vocational schools by subsidizing construction costs

To promote skills in the blue collar sector of the Middle Eastern workforce, the construction of vocational schools will not only create construction jobs in the short term, but also provide students with trade skills that could improve the infrastructure of the region.

9. Economic – Create an Arabian trade network by building on the success of qualifying industrial zones in Egypt

By increasing economic cooperation in the Middle East, a region wide export industry will promote political cooperation between Middle East nations as the protocol for such trade agreements would require.

10. Inaugurate reciprocal tariff agreements between the Middle East and the West and place diplomatic pressure on our allies to do the same

By exposing the Middle East to large Western consumer markets, the increase in demand for Middle Eastern products will result in the increase of production. This will create jobs and require an increase in infrastructure.

11. Political – Leverage good governance practices with economic cooperation with foreign markets by engaging in political policy forums

Those nations not practicing good governance will be given an incentive to create public policies that benefit the people of their respective nations. In addition, the economic cooperation will also enhance the economy of these nations.

12. Request countries with strong economic postures to take leadership in their political and economic transactions with neighboring countries

Economically stable countries, such as GCC members, can posture future aid packages and trade agreements with stipulations that require nations to abide by fair economic practices that benefit the people.
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2 Dhillon, Navtej, and Tarik Yousef. Looking to the Future. Inclusion: Meeting the 100 Million Youth Challenge. The Wolfensohn Center for Development at Brookings & the Dubai School of Government.

Pensions and Palliative Care: Austerity, the Welfare State, and Population Flows in North America

November 2, 2013

The North American Roundtable:

- Student Conference on United States Affairs 65, West Point, NY

Tsun Wai Choi, Queensborough Community College
Galuh Bayuaji, University of Albany SUNY
Ross Brady, Texas A&M University
Elizabeth Henehan, Boston University
Nicholas Huxter, Royal Military College of Canada
Ryan Giarusso, United States Military Academy
James Kellaher, Le Moyne College
Mackenzie Latimer, United States Military Academy
Melissa Sanchez, Harvard University
Thomas Savidge, State University of New York at New Paltz
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Dr. Jason Fichtner, Co-Chair
Dr. Michelle Silver, Co-Chair

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Introduction

The aging of the American people is fundamentally challenging the social services landscape in the United States. Programming established to protect the most vulnerable members of American society faces the threat of becoming fiscally unsustainable. As the country's many baby boomers age out of the workforce the demands for greater social support structures and programs grows, creating strains on programs like Social Security and challenging the solvency of such national systems of support. At the same time many young adults find themselves unemployed or underemployed and thus unable to fully contribute to the financial security of such programs. Ultimately, this suggests a need for a new system wherein individuals young and old address aging in ways that prove financially expedient. In order to address the needs of the aging while ensuring the future of working age Americans measures need to be taken to ensure collaboration across national, state, and local governments. Vital to the concept of social security is the premise that the young regularly contribute to the social welfare system while the retired elderly retrieve their lifetime contributions when they reach retirement age. In order for this system to be maintained we need reform in the pension scheme as well as an understanding of other important demographic variables.

This paper will suggest a framework, modeled after the World Bank pension scheme which focuses international pension policy around accessibility, adequacy, and sustainability. This sets a foundation for our proposal of a tiered system to address aging and palliative care policy in the U.S. grounded in the unique demographic and democratic nature of American social welfare and security programs. At the center of our proposal is a concern with greater levels of partnership between public and private stakeholders and institutions. Our policy plan puts forth a dynamic social security system that incorporates a private model. Moreover we consider implementing a government pension contribution. This policy will also consider reform to the current child care and benefits system to ensure the most efficient use of welfare and ultimately slow the decline of social support system while contributing to larger contributing cohort of young workers. Moreover this will be facilitated by reforms to immigration policies. Finally we want to discuss the technical barriers our medical system presents in terms of its impact on the social welfare system and the lack of accurate information conveyed to the elderly in regards to providing coordinated care to our aging and thus drive down costs while increasing efficiencies.

Demographics

The present American demographic distribution portends an omen for the future sustainability of social security, end of life care, and public well-being. Initially implemented as a safeguard against economic displacement and unanticipated longevity, Social Security has become perceived as a public retirement program. In the near future, the system will be impaired by an impending demographic crisis, fueled by a population experiencing a baby-boomer bulge. In the last five decades, the elderly have grown in number due to better health and higher life expectancy. This, coupled with reduced family size, creates burdens for the working age population, as a smaller number of youth are supporting a larger number of retirees. Two factors influence the demographic distribution: immigration and childbearing. Ultimately, demographics pose formidable challenges to fundamentally alter the future America population distribution. Thus, we recommend the implementation of policies that encourage the immigration of highly skilled workers as well as the preservation of the population sustainment average rate of at least
two children per family to ensure a stable population. First, the group recommends that the government increases the opportunities for international high-skilled laborers to obtain entrance to the United States by eliminating government restrictions and disincentives. Such workers will possess the necessary skills to contribute to the growth of the United States’ economy and innovation. In addition to high skilled immigration, the United States could also lower the laborer mobility barriers between current NAFTA countries to augment the population of youth and high-skilled workers. Furthermore, to prevent the continuation of declining birthrates and preserve a stable birth rate ratio and thus a stable population, this paper recommends the implementation of policies supportive of households with children. In particular, we advise the allowance of six weeks guaranteed parental leave that is interchangeable for both parents so that both parents may maintain their families without sacrificing their careers. Thus, while recognizing the limited impact one may exert on demographics, we nevertheless advise the implementation of policies that encourage population stability and economic growth.

The Solution

Our proposal addresses the critical problems in social security and its current funding peril through a number of domestic and international ideas. To build a better system for the future, we examined the objectives of social security as a whole and addressed them individually. First and foremost, social security exists as a kind of old age and disability insurance. Old age insurance exists to alleviate poverty in seniors who have lived past their ability to work and their savings, while disability insurance covers the same situations for those with physical and mental impairments. Over the past near-century, however, social security has expanded from these two initial objectives to encompass an additional and gargantuan obligation: a nationalized pension plan, which provides for the retirement of every American. This has occurred not because of expansive legislation, but a fixed retirement age which allows for an ever-increasing benefits period as improved healthcare expands life expectancy and quality of life. Our system seeks to maintain the essential functions of social security as an insurance for those most vulnerable in our society while ensuring the fiscal feasibility of American’s retirement into the future.

A Three-Pronged Approach

The proposed system treats retirement savings as a three-pronged approach, which we will refer to as public, private, and individual. This section describes the proposal in its fully implemented state after a 30-year transition period outlined later. We cannot stress enough the importance of this long-term transition, as it ensures Americans’ existing retirement plans will remain feasible for them throughout their lives.

The public component remains as social security. It still provides a monthly benefit adjusted periodically to the cost of living for eligible recipients. To receive this benefit, an individual must meet one of two criteria. One is disability, according to the same standards as today. The other, by age, will shift from a fixed age target, which presently varies roughly within 63-67, to their life expectancy established at birth. Each year, individuals born are part of a birth year group of all babies born in that given year, their estimated average life expectancy for their birth year group will serve as the age at which they will begin to receive a monthly benefit from social security.
The funding for this program will remain a payroll tax assessed on all income below $250,000, adjusted yearly for inflation. The current social security contribution payroll tax stands at 12.4%. At the end of the transition period, this will fall to 12.0%. This tax burden is shared between employer and employee paid portions, and will remain so with 7% coming from employers and 5% coming from employees. Of the employer portion, 2% of income will fund the public component, which will require significantly less funding as fewer individuals will draw from the program, all for a shorter time, while more individuals remain contributing members of the work force. The remaining 10% will fund the second component of the proposal.

We recognize the modern standard of retirement and seek to retain and even improve Americans’ ability to retire comfortably through improved financial resources and assistance. The payroll tax of 5% of income from employer and 5% from employee will feed into a personal retirement account set up much like the current government Thrift Savings Plan (TSP). Employers will be automatically enrolled in the program with their payroll taxes contributing to a lifecycle (L) fund set for maturity at 15 years prior to life expectancy. Individuals may select an alternative TSP plan of their choosing utilizing the planning resources already available. They may also choose to opt-out of the TSP program with two caveats. From the very beginning, individuals may choose to direct their 5% payroll tax to any investment vehicle of their choosing. Their employer contributions, however, must continue to contribute to their TSP until the total value of the account exceeds $120,000, adjusted for inflation. Any excess above $100,000 may similarly be directed to any investment vehicle of the individual’s choosing.

The third component of the proposal composes individual retirement savings, which includes the present day programs such as 401k’s and IRAs, which remain unchanged. In total, this program provides for the social security of America’s most vulnerable through an insurance pension for the old and disabled and a guideline investment vehicle for every American. When plotted over a lifetime, an individual who works a minimum wage job from age 20 to age 65 and directs all employee contributions to investments which lose 100% of their value, will still have enough savings to retire at age 65 and provide for themselves until eligible for social security at age 80, assuming a 5% rate of return. This is by far an extreme and unlikely case, but helps to showcase the security and sustainability of the private component.

This arrangement ensures the long-term stability of America’s retirement system by eliminating the threat of unfunded obligations of a large national pension system, encourages individual responsibility and proactive action with the support of existing government provided investment resources, and establishes a system that, once in place, adapts itself for advancing technology to ensure Americans’ continued savings and prosperity into the future.

Additional Security: Guaranteed Bonds

To guarantee to all a minimum standard of living taking into consideration longer life expectancies and projected increases in longevity, we propose a supplemental bonds system. This bonds system will function on two levels. Newborn American children will receive baby bonds in the amount of $1000 that will mature at the established national retirement age for each child’s age group. For individuals of working age beginning at age 24, a lifetime bond will be issued that will be tied to the pool of social security funds available from all contributions. This lifetime bond will provide for end of life care and catastrophic expenses ten years after retirement. Individuals will have the option of accessing the funds once they reach the midpoint.
between retirement age and life expectancy, or to allow the bond to continue to accrue interest if they choose to remain in the workforce. This will be available as either a lump sum or a government annuity.

**Implementation and Transition**

The implementation of the private option will constitute a transition plan that will span thirty years and enable a smooth transition from the current system into a majority private social security program. The transition will consist of a 0.5% change per year in contributions made to either social security or personal savings as defined in our three-pronged approach. For those currently participating in the established social security program, ages 55-65, the program will remain the same. For working age individuals, their contributions to the established system will be dispersed to them at retirement age according to our current social security program. Upon implementation, individuals of working age (ages 24-54) will move towards the first stage of the transition process and contribute to their social security savings according to the transition timeline in the following table. Every six years, the percentage of contributions to personal savings will increase by 2% and the percentage of social security contributions will decrease by 2.4%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benchmark Year</th>
<th>% of Savings Contribution</th>
<th>% of Social Security (SS) Contribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This transition plan ensures that everyone has a baseline of coverage and the incorporation of the new savings will ensure that individuals can have decent standard of living by allowing them greater control over their savings. In this way, we facilitate a move towards a more private model of retirement without denying benefits to those already planning their retirement under our current system.

**Democratic Challenges**

The current democratic framework and political institutions along with the economic and cultural circumstances of the United States influenced the suggested policy creation and implementation. Social Security was initially designed as a self-supporting insurance program to create a safety net for the elderly or otherwise “disadvantaged.” However, since it’s initial creation in 1934, the function and overall perception of the program’s purpose has shifted to treating it as a national pension program.

This shift in perceived purpose to a pension program is unsustainable and politically risky to reform. The ballooning elderly population, rate of immigration, disincentives for personal saving and other factors create a population dependent on the government. The importance of these safety nets generates the fear of losing money people feel they worked for and paid into.
their entire lives. These dynamics make it politically risky for any policy reform to occur on either side of the American dualistic political system. Thus, the lack of political motivation and the antagonistic two party system has not created a workable solution.

In contrast, the three pronged system reforms the public option and incorporates individual and private savings programs. The public option returns the system to an insurance program for the disadvantaged. The employees’ thrift savings program in the private option incentivizes personal savings practices, which gives people more fiscal independence into old age.\(^{58}\) There is also the option to invest in federal, state, and municipal bonds for individuals looking to invest in the government, state or local communities. Furthermore, the bonds at birth program allows for savings to accrue throughout life. Also allowing the individuals to opt out of the default savings plan adheres to the constitutional and individualist ethos of America.

In an effort to overcome and change the rhetoric of risk and fear associated with Social Security reform, these policies are designed to remain constantly open to critique and reform based on changes in demographics. By pegging the retirement age to the life expectancy index, this program is more adaptable and creates a more flexible policy. The failure of the current policy to account for increases in life expectancy and, in turn, the booming elderly population among other factors is the main drive for reform today.\(^{59}\) The current system has also failed to account for increases in two-income households, causing a two-income household to pay higher taxes than single earner households.\(^{60}\) Our children and grandchildren will inevitably face new problems we cannot predict. This calls for forging new flexible policies in order to avoid future failures and adapt to future changing demographics.

\(^{58}\) https://www.tsp.gov/investmentfunds/fundsoverview/comparisonMatrix.shtml  
The Dying Bear Reborn?

November 2, 2013

The Russia Roundtable:

❖ Student Conference on United States Affairs 65, West Point, NY
Seth Bond, US Military Academy
Joseph Koomar, US Military Academy
Dresden Hasal-Shooks, Baylor University
Blake Baiers, Loyola University, Chicago
Julia Van Raalte, Colorado College
Nick Kosturos, University of Southern California
Helen Haft, Vassar College
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The overall population of Russia is increasing incrementally at the moment. Recent demographic projections predict that its population will continue to rise until 2025. However, it is not increasing proportionally; the primary groups contributing to the rising population are immigrant groups from Central Asia, the Caucasus, and China. The decreasing ethnic Russian population maintains tenuous relationships with immigrant communities from these regions. Immigrant groups in Russia are met with xenophobic hostility from the Russian majority that augments their difficulties in integrating with Russian culture. Additionally, relationships between these immigrant groups are fragile.

Russia needs these immigrants to fulfill its replacement rate and avoid a population decrease in the short term. Russia’s economy can benefit from having low wage immigrant workers in industrial sectors. The US will not generally be affected by these short-term changes. In the long term, however, Russia’s population is forecasted to contract in spite of high immigration. This decline will have economic and military implications within Russia that the US must take into account when crafting its foreign policy. Furthermore, the tensions associated with immigrant groups have the potential for causing widespread violence in Russia. Since ethnic violence in Russia could have global ramifications, the United States will have to prepare to defend its interests should Russia destabilize.

**Short Term: Stagnant Population Growth (Present - 2025)**

**Immigrant Challenges**

The recent increase in immigration is providing Russia with the manual labor force needed to sustain its industrial economy based primarily in natural resources. However, this could prove problematic in the future if these new immigrants are unable to progress from the lower economic class. The result of this influx of immigrants to primarily lower economic strata coincides with poor access to education. Without a way of educating and facilitating social mobility for these immigrants, Russia wastes a significant amount of its new human capital. These lower-wage workers do not contribute substantially to innovation, and strain social welfare programs that the state already has difficulties in funding. High immigration thus exacerbates a low social mobility that contributes to interethnic and nationalistic tensions.

**The American Role**

The United States is not in a position in which it can influence Russia’s demographics in the short term. Doing so would further alienate the Kremlin. Thus, the primary role of the United States in the short term is limited to monitoring these population flows. We should stay informed of the current tendencies of ethnic tension and violence that are currently transpiring. Establishing grants and funding for the study of immigrant languages and cultures will help

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61 Immigrants from Central Asia and the Caucasus also maintain significantly higher birth rates than that of the ethnic Russian population (in the neighborhood of 2.5x more)
facilitate our understanding of these issues. At present, our comprehension of how all these groups interact with each other is lacking; we will need to increase our understanding of Russian minorities in order to implement better policies in the future.

Cultural understanding is a crucial (and oft-neglected) element to facilitating successful communication with the minority peoples in Russia. A program that has already been implemented is Project: Go. The purpose of this program is to expose US students who are pursuing international relations, military, and linguistic careers in the study of critical languages to areas that are rarely studied in American academia at present. Project: Go and other programs, such as the Critical Language Scholarships, ought to be expanded to include programs in areas dominated by ethnic minorities within Russia. These programs are not being utilized to their maximum potential. The United States should advocate further advances in research and study of current demographic flows into and out of Russia while emphasizing foreign language acquisition and cultural understanding among Americans.

**Long Term: Population Decreases (Post-2025)**

Current projections indicate that the Russian population will experience a long-term decline after 2025. This trend is concerning because a less populated Russia threatens U.S.-Russia nuclear relations, Russian economic stability, and U.S. influence in Central Asia.

**Weapons of Mass Destruction**

Due to the predicted decline of the Russian population, the Russian Federation may shift its security policy focus to its vast stockpile of nuclear weapons in the 21st century. A smaller Russian population would provide a smaller pool of viable military conscripts. The Kremlin may seek to compensate by maintaining or increasing stockpiles weapons of mass destruction.

The United States should continue to strictly enforce the parameters of the New START Treaty and work on additional agreements to continue international disarmament efforts. It is in the best interest of the United States that the Russian Federation continues to honor nuclear disarmament agreements.

**Economic Stability**

Population decline in Russia has important implications for long-term economic stability in Eurasia. As the population ages and decreases over time, domestic consumption of energy resources will also decline in Russia. This change would enable Russia, which consumes two-thirds of its oil and natural gas domestically, to export more to the global market without increasing production efforts. To compensate for this diminishing demand at home, Russia

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62 www.rotcprojectgo.com
64 National Center for Policy Analysis http://www.ncpa.org
would sell a greater proportion of its energy internationally, predominantly to Europe. However, since Russia is still expected to be the primary provider of energy to Europe, it may behave like a monopolistic competitor. In this situation, Russia could set prices while decreasing total production. Price setting would maximize profits. Decreased production would extend the usefulness of energy exports as a foreign policy tool farther into the future. However, the economics of Russia’s energy exports are dependent on multiple factors in the long term, and energy revenues in Russia could increase or decrease due to unforeseen circumstances.

Possible Effects of Combined Economic and Demographic Shifts

The probable shifts in revenue become problematic as Russia’s population ages and increases its dependence on social welfare programs. The Russian government is currently unable to sustain these programs. If revenues from energy decrease, the youth will be called upon to support the elderly. Elderly dependence on social welfare programs will strain the capabilities of the youth population in Russia. If the working population faces unemployment, the workers will be dissatisfied, and the elderly will be underserviced. Likewise, if the working population is overtaxed to provide for the retired generation, their discontent with increasing taxation may rise. In either scenario, there is a potential for economic dissatisfaction that could lead to civil unrest.

US ability to influence economic stability in Russia is limited. Responsibility for Russian economics lies with the Russian government. US policymakers should nonetheless continue to monitor Russian economics in order to allow the US to gain a perspective on the future of energy economics in Europe while observing the potential for political unrest in Russia. Additionally, since Russia is a monopolistic competitor in the European energy market, the US should look to develop other sources of energy that can be competitively sold to European consumers. This would assist its European allies in meeting their goals of diversifying their energy sources over the coming decades. If political unrest continues to build in Russia in the long term, however, the US must be prepared to act in order to best serve its interests as diplomatically as possible.

Demographic Shifts in Immigrant and Minority Populations

Characteristics of Immigration and Minorities

2013 is expected to be the first year since the fall of the Soviet Union in which the Russian population has increased. However, the most significant increases in the Russian population are due to the current growth of its ethnic minorities and increasing immigration from these groups. On average, ethnic Russian women have between one-sixth and one-tenth as many children as minority women in Russian border regions (CITE). In 2011, Russia absorbed about 315,000 immigrants, mainly from the Caucasus, Central Asia and China. Projections of future

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65 Central Intelligence Agency World Factbook
immigration expect this number to rise in coming years; accordingly, the proportion of ethnic Russians within the Russian population will continue to decrease. However, Immigrants continue to face discrimination from a Russian population that does not treat foreigners very well. The majority of these immigrants may not fit the mold of mainstream Russian society. Many are not native Russian speakers and hold different religious and political beliefs. Accordingly, tensions are already rising in major metropolitan centers as well as in majority-minority regions in Russia’s south.

Possible Ethnic Conflict in the Caucasus Autonomous Regions

Ethnic conflict has erupted numerous times over the past decade in Chechnya, Dagestan, and even Moscow. This has contributed to mass protests by ethnic Russians who still comprise eighty percent of the Russian population and the rise of several nationalistic political opposition groups. Two more drastic examples of this rising tension are both Chechen Wars that ravaged the various autonomous republics in the Caucasus throughout the 1990s. A key cause of the conflict was the immigration of Wahhabi fighters and jihadists from Saudi Arabia and Afghanistan, where Chechen rebels had been trained by Islamists. Because tension between ethnic Russians and Russia’s minorities may once again lead to Russian military action, US strategic goals, particularly political stability in the wider region, are being challenged by this increasing unrest. It is in US best interests to maintain constant oversight of the ethnic dynamics at play; diplomatic actions may be needed to prevent unrest in Russia from undermining energy security in Europe or national security for Caucasus nations.

In order to most appropriately contend with this issue, we suggest the allocation of US resources in order to monitor the changing demographic shifts caused by immigration. Furthermore, we recommend closer American collaboration with the OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) as a measure to defuse ethnic tensions in Russia’s periphery. Finally, we believe federally funded cross-cultural exchange programs with Russia’s ethnic minorities would facilitate better American understanding of economic and political issues related to ethnicity in Russia.

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Where Have All the Dollars Gone? Currency Flows, Sovereign Wealth Funds, and the Global Economy

November 2, 2013

The International Political Economy Roundtable:

- Student Conference on United States Affairs 65, West Point, NY

Amy Basu, Colgate University
Hakop Azatyan, University of California, Irvine
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Introduction

With the proliferation of telecommunications technology, the international political economy has the potential to achieve an unparalleled level of interdependence. However, human actors being driven by self-interest, the domestic concerns of policy makers reign paramount. More specifically, a prominent youth bulge in such developing countries as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Angola, when coupled with high unemployment, poses a destabilizing factor for the ruling regime. To mitigate civil unrest, states insert themselves as the dominant force in the economy in order to achieve such political objectives as domestic job creation. Such state capitalism is further augmented by foreign investment in the form of sovereign wealth funds. Through such funds, states assume a role resembling other, more private investment houses and seek to maximize returns in the global market. While the inclusion of often authoritarian governments in exchange market is certainly a step towards broader capitalism, concerns are raised regarding motives in this often opaque exchange. This fear of foreign investment coupled with a desire to preserve domestic jobs culminates in a more restrictive form of globalization.

With an economy largely grounded in consumption, the United States ran a current account deficit (the combined balances of trade, income and net unilateral transfers) of 98.9 billion dollars in the second quarter of 2013 thereby leaving us with the question, “where have all the dollars gone?” In response, to fuel aforementioned state capitalism, countries compile American dollars in foreign currency reserves that ultimately fuel sovereign wealth funds in the interest of profit maximization. That being said, a political climate of indirect protectionism traps capital in a limbo characterized by a “gated” global economy.

The Present Model

The Life Cycle Theory of Consumption establishes the demographic context in which state economies interact on the international market. Demographic differences among nations result in a dichotomy between market practices. Specifically, this theory argues that younger states save so as to facilitate smooth consumption as they age. In the globalized market, capital flows between states enable such disparate consumption ratios. That being said, the aftermath of the 2008 economic crisis fomented skepticism regarding globalization. Increasing interdependence and its seeming subsequent fragility created a new fear of powerlessness among previously stable economies. To safeguard domestic stability, countries are increasingly careful in the nature of capital flows permitted. An underlying premise of the social contract inherent to the legitimacy of capitalism is its promise to allow a level playing field amongst competitors. The unfortunate truth is that the world falls far short of this ideal.

Among the great economies of the world, there are many means by which to secure wealth and prosperity. Within the spectrum of command and market economies, there exist variations of the classic Free Market Model. From this model, a new pattern of what has been

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called State Capitalism has emerged. State Capitalism occurs when the state, through bureaucratic means, engineers its economic interests in order to further political gain. Implementation of the state’s agenda occurs through its ownership of corporations and funds. One tool, gaining increasing prominence is the Sovereign Wealth Fund (SWF). A SWF is a state owned investment fund of real and financial assets. Their value is fundamentally generated by the accumulation of a current account surplus and consequent foreign currency reserves (thus addressing the question as to “where have all the dollars gone”). In 2012, there are more than 50 sovereign wealth funds, and according to the SWF Institute, has exceeding north of $5 trillion. Their nature, as state controlled assets, prevents auditing by third parties; therefore a precise figure is unknown. Their lack of transparency causes paranoia within the market realm.

State Capitalism has become many countries’ answer to market volatility. Sovereign Wealth Funds are but one tool out of many. Historically, economies which have favored a command model have had limited impact on the global economy yet this trend is changing. Vehicles such as state owned corporations and the sovereign wealth funds allow these governments to take a more active role. The financing of enormous projects, from economic cities and zones to infrastructure and power, have all allowed command economies to take charge of their markets. Considering both the youth bulge and rapid rural to urban migration recurrent in many developing states, policy makers are primarily concerned with providing jobs to such an otherwise volatile population. In this way, a more interventionist strategy is appealing to state leaders as a means to protect domestic employment (and thereby tranquility) from global market volatility. Consequently these countries pick “winners and losers” independent of market forces thereby sacrificing a more efficient, sustainable growth for short-term domestic considerations. Enhancing this inequality is a trend that has become known as the “gated global economy.” This trend embodies discriminatory capital flows, a nationalist reaction to some of the perceived dangers of an integrated global economy. Examples of gates include unfair regulations that disadvantage foreign companies. Gates often take the form of non-tariff barriers. Hard to combat within the international arena, non-tariff barriers are sometimes hard to define.

Bureaucratic policy and regulation further the political goals of a nation by favoring special domestic interests. Protectionism, in the form of gates creates inefficiency and lowers productivity. Competitive advantage suffers at the profit of firms otherwise left by the economic wayside.

Solution

Capital Flows

It is evidently in the United States’ interest, in accordance with the principles of free and fair trade, to promote capital mobility and transparency. Increased capital mobility encourages industries to compete for capital, therefore ensuring that it is allocated to the most efficient and

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innovative industries. Furthermore, according to the neoclassical model of economic growth, full capital mobility enables higher rates of convergence for capital and output than in closed economies.\textsuperscript{70} This will close the income gap between developing and developed nations at a faster rate, increasing the overall standard of living in the world.

Empirical evidence suggests that countries with open capital markets outperform those that restrict capital flows.\textsuperscript{71} It is most apparent through the effect on foreign savings, and thereby, on aggregate investment. Countries with a more open capital flow system will have, in theory, the capacity to fund a larger current account deficit, and thus increase the amount of foreign savings. This will enable higher investment and, thus, an increased pace of economic growth\textsuperscript{72}. In addition, eliminating capital controls diminishes distortions in the market, which in turn induces a greater return to investment and accelerates total factor productivity growth.

\textit{Sovereign Wealth Funds}

The present system of investment through SWF has not yet caused significant disruption in the global economic system. SWFs do not usually involve controlling interests in the firms they invest in, and in the rare cases that they do, the investments do not provide evidence of political motives; they are usually undertaken for pure profit-seeking.

However, the SWF system suffers from two major problems; lack of transparency and the trade-off between national security and investment gains. The secrecy surrounding SWFs naturally raises concerns about the origins of the financing and its underlying motives. For example, recent investments in the financial and real estate sectors from “Undisclosed Middle East Investors” have raised domestic concerns about the reasons behind this identity concealment\textsuperscript{73}. This may lead to a protectionist backlash which would negatively affect the flow of capital into the United States economy. Moreover, the national security concerns arise from cases in which a foreign country gains a formal controlling share of domestic company. In these cases, although the increased capital inflow may be beneficial to the industry, it may compromise a country’s control on its intellectual capital and critical defense systems.\textsuperscript{74}

\textit{Demographics}

It is in the United States’ best interest to promote stability in regions experiencing “youth bulges” and the resulting political volatility. Current demographic trends demonstrate a correlation between economic prosperity and low rates of population growth (thus mitigating the problem of unemployed youth). Therefore, in order to achieve stability in these areas, the US should formulate a policy that encourages the spread of economic growth and the creation of new jobs across the globe.

\textsuperscript{72} Ibid. 9.
Policy

Overall, it is imperative that the United States continues to maintain a firm stance on free market ideology. Free capital flows, and ultimately increased globalization will enable both domestic and foreign prosperity, thus culminating in both comparative advantage and stability throughout the world.

This begins with a continued policy of openness to market driven investment, regardless of whether it is reciprocated by other countries. Economic gains from openness to investment will themselves create an incentive for other countries to emulate US policy and reduce barriers to capital flows. However, this openness should be tempered by awareness of the importance of preserving intellectual and physical property. Hence the primary role of US policy should be to facilitate a transparent, interconnected global economy in which national security is preserved and property rights respected. This includes openness to sovereign wealth funds, providing that they are transparent about their investment policies and used solely for profit-seeking and not political motives.

This can be accomplished through the implementation of watchdog organizations such as the Committee of Foreign Investment of the United States (CFIUS). These organizations should be designed to review foreign investments in the interest of national security, without deterring foreign capital from entering the domestic market. These institutions have already proven to be a valuable asset for regulation of foreign investment. Most recently, CFIUS has protected “critical [US] infrastructure” in the technology market, while facilitating foreign investment in businesses, such as Smithfield Foods, which are less essential to national security. The success of the CFIUS will demonstrate the effectiveness of this model to other nations, thus allowing for increased transparency in the global market.

Conclusion

In whole, it is imperative that the United States combat the growth of indirect protectionism by itself remaining firm in free market ideology and further exploiting its position as a global economic “hegemon” to actively promote such principles in the international market. As countries cope with a bulging youth population characteristic of the second stage of the demographic transition model, the need to foster employment (and thereby mitigate potential instability) reigns paramount. For this reason, indirect protectionism through state capitalism is alluring but unsustainable. Rather, countries must recognize that it is in their national interests to permit free capital flows and, through interdependence, foster an economic climate for innovation and the sustainable growth that will provide long run job creation.

WORKS CITED


The Revolution Will Be Tweeted? Accountability, Social Media, and State Power

November 2, 2013

The Social Media Roundtable:

- Student Conference on United States Affairs 65, West Point, NY
  - Wade Allen, US Military Academy
  - Steven Bartomioli, Norwich University
  - William Cuervo, Norwich University
  - Sarah J. Galvez, Simmons College
  - Kelsey Hannah, Washington College
  - Hokyung Kwon, Queensborough College
  - Jordan Lee, Wellesley College
  - Andrew Majkut, Connecticut College
  - Ashley Marcoux, University of New Hampshire
  - Ariana Oregal, University of California, Irvine
  - Akheel Patel, US Naval Academy
  - Yvonne Ploder, Georgia Institute of Technology
  - Krishnan Rajagopalan, US Naval Academy
  - Claire Stevens, University of Pacific
  - David Thomson, US Coast Guard Academy
  - Andrew Trexler, Wesleyan University
  - Yu Zhang, Mountbatten Institute

Yael Bar-Tur, Co-Chair
Matthew Carroll, Co-Chair

Samuel Sands, Roundtable Discussion Leader, United States Military Academy
Nathan Hernandez, Roundtable Scribe, United States Military Academy
MEMORANDUM

From: SCUSA Delegates, Social Media Roundtable

Date: 2nd November 2013

Subject: Improving Venezuelan Perceptions of United States through Social Media

Summary: Venezuelans have a very low opinion of the United States. Currently, there is no social media outreach to Venezuela at this time. The recent election and political changes in Venezuela open a window of opportunity for improving American sentiments. Engaging the Venezuelan population with social media will improve perceptions of the United States. Because there is no direct interaction with the Venezuelan people, we recommend expanding our public diplomacy efforts through existing social media platforms to mitigate anti-American sentiment.

Discussion: Venezuela has experienced continuous growth in modern technological communication and now stands at 42% internet penetration and near-total cell phone penetration. After a prominent religious site, Facebook and Twitter are the largest news sources in Venezuela and Twitter is heavily utilized for political discussion. This preference for American products indicates that Venezuelan anti-American sentiments are limited to American policy and not American culture.

Options for Implementation:

Option 1: Offer a grant competition to marketing firms and other non-governmental organizations to create a social media-based campaign that promotes pro-American sentiments in Venezuela.

- Medium control of the campaign content and implementation
- High utilization of market forces for idea generation
- Leaves social media and marketing expertise to experts
- Medium flexibility for campaign development
- Low opportunity cost

Option 2: Create (in-house) a social media-based marketing campaign aimed at the Venezuelan population that promotes pro-American sentiments in Venezuela.

- High control of the campaign content and implementation
Low utilization of market forces for idea generation
- Requires social media and marketing expertise
- High flexibility for campaign development
- High opportunity cost

**Option 3:** Contract a marketing firm to create a social media-based campaign that promotes pro-American sentiments in Venezuela.

- Low level of the campaign content and implementation
- Medium utilization of market forces for idea generation
- Leaves social media and marketing expertise to experts
- Low flexibility for campaign development
- Low opportunity cost

**Recommendation and Rationale:**

We recommend Option 1. This option takes advantage of market forces to create the best possible campaign, increasing likelihood of success, while maintaining an acceptable level of control over the project.
Women and Wealth, Understanding Women’s role in Global Development

November 2, 2013

The Women and Wealth Roundtable:

- Student Conference on United States Affairs 65, West Point, NY
Caitlyn Anderson, US Military Academy
Charles Koch, US Military Academy
Molly Bangs, Connecticut College
Gwenith Cross, Wilfrid Laurier University
Sari Goldstein, Pennsylvania State University
Gabrielle Hanners, The King’s College
Katharina Hildebrandt, New Jersey Institute for Technology
Therese Murphy, Boston College
Karla Nettleton, Colorado State University
Jordan Rettie, United States Naval Academy
Addy Schneider, Bard College
Tony Seleznick, United States Coast Guard Academy
Amogh Tathe, Farleigh Dickenson University
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Introduction

United States policy should strengthen women’s central role in economic development by focusing on improvements in education. Education is a catalyst for women’s empowerment, which enables women to unlock the economic potential associated with unique contributions, investments, and normative change. By exploring four spheres of influence on education – community, formal institutions, family involvement, and the future generation – this paper identifies challenges associated with theses spheres and recommends policy to remedy these issues. The prevailing recommendation is for the US to fund grassroots organizations directly as they are the best equipped enablers for women’s empowerment through education.
In order for societies to recognize women’s equality and their potential as wealth creators, education must come first. Through primary education (increasing literacy rates) and vocational training, women and girls not only gain knowledge, but confidence in themselves. Unless women have education, gender discriminatory norms will continue to persist. Without education, women lack the means to choose what they do in life and affect social change.

Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn argue in their book, *Half the Sky*, that “leadership must come from the developing world itself.” Grassroots women's organizations have a unique ability to affect social change by advocating and promoting civic action to keep women and girls in school. Within these groups, women themselves are the instruments of change. The norms can shift when community groups are recognized and supported. They know and understand their people, the core problems they face, and prejudices that work against them. This approach is supported by Dr. Gordon Perkin of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, who advocates engaging with local groups that "are best able to reach and help women around the world" and "educate and train the local community."  

In addition to the burden of social norms, funding remains a critical barrier to grassroots organizations’ ability to affect change. According to Robert Bothwell, the founding director of the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy, “Grassroots proposals for funding often get turned down... because of incompatible foundation guidelines, arbitrary decisions and ignorance of grassroots organizations.” Furthermore, if organizations receive aid, it is generally very limited. Bothwell also states that in order to create a "major positive impact" on their organizations, grassroots leaders say they need a substantial increase in their current foundation grants of about 100%.

In order to address these concerns, the US should fund grassroots organizations that specifically empower women in their own communities through securing a primary education and vocational training. However, the provision of funds to grassroots organizations alone is not sufficient. In order to successfully foster the growth and spread of grassroots education initiatives that maintain a focus on women, an opportunity for constructive communication needs to be established. For this reason, the United States government should partner with the United Nations Secretary-General’s Global Initiative on Education to establish an annual international forum for the purpose of strengthening and creating partnerships among NGOs to empower women to be wealth creators. This yearly forum would be facilitated by multilateral and civil society partners. As well, this conference would aid organizations in capitalizing on previous progress and good practices, such as the Learning Metric Task Force recommendations and the

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Education for All Goals. Because the conference would be open to all relevant civil society organizations, not just those funded by the US government, the horizontal nature of the partnerships would allow grassroots organizations to cooperate with civil society in a culturally and religiously appropriate way. This format would also create a mutually beneficial relationship for grassroots civil society organizations and larger foundations due to increased communication.

A second avenue of change that the United States government should promote is the development of nation specific public-private partnerships. In the past, nations such as Jordan, Egypt and India have developed multi stakeholder partnerships with great success. For instance, 2003 saw the creation of the Jordan Education Initiative (JEI). In the program’s first 4 years, more than 17 global corporations, 17 Jordanian entities and 11 governmental and non-governmental organizations in partnership with the government of Jordan raised over $25 million US dollars for education. With these funds, the partnership was able to complete technology infrastructure in over 100 schools, deploy 5 different kinds of e-learning content, continue the development of civics curriculum, provide additional training to teachers and create committees to aid in further educational reform. If these forums are developed with the express intent of aiding the education of women in particular, the nation could create and sustain ground up economic and normative changes that will benefit and empower women.

Government funding is absolutely critical to helping grassroots organizations promote and establish women’s roles in economic development. Many international funders and foundations will not agree to support grassroots organizations “unless they can demonstrate a solid base of local support for their work. Many [funders]... will not guarantee more than one year of funding at a time and will, after a few years of grants, stop their support altogether, no matter how well the organization performs.” In light of these obstacles, governmental funding is crucial to both fiscally support underfunded grassroots organizations and contribute to their credibility. This credibility, in turn, garners resources for local leaders to impact normative change.

There are grassroots organizations existent globally in which women have enhanced access to education for other women and girls within their communities. These organizations have since gained that international recognition, support, and credibility critical for sustainability. Mukhtar Mai, Pakistani advocate for women’s rights and education, founded a school for girls in the Southern region of the Punjab Province of Pakistan, and went on to form the Mukhtar Mai Women’s Organisation (MMWO) in 2003. Its welfare center provides education and welfare access for women beyond the primary level of education. Given its funding by Mercy Corps, an

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American/British NGO based out of Pakistan, the MMWO demonstrates its credibility in terms of sustainable grassroots change. Dr. Sakena Yacoobi founded the Afghan Institute of Learning (AIL) in 1995. Its success over the past couple of decades has been proven by its regional diffusion, as the NGO now works to improve access to education and health – particularly for women and children – in Pakistan, as well as Afghanistan.

By promoting access and quality of primary education, vocational training, and the empowerment of girls and women, NGOs facilitate women’s roles in economic development as wealth creators. Women as wealth creators turn resources into capital which helps to develop and expand the economy. According to the World Bank, “women’s access to institutions is a main indicator of equality for women in a society and their ability to contribute to the economy.” The reality is that community must be funded in order to for women to make significant normative changes and in turn, economic developments. As Abhijit Banerjee and Esther Duflo point out, the failure of schools “...is a sign of the catastrophic failure of the establishment-led effort to increase education from the top down. Building schools and hiring teachers is useless if there is no strong underlying demand for education in the community.” Supporting grassroots efforts will create this demand.

**Formal Institutions**

Families provide the earliest and most basic form of education to children. Early on, children are influenced by norms set by families and communities. When parents (or guardians) are involved in children’s schools, schools are more likely to be held accountable for performance and, consequently, quality tends improved. Involved families also encourage children to be enthusiastic learners and strong students. However, many families around the world do not have the opportunity to send their children to school, let along be involved in school life, due to financial difficu

Three policy alternatives are required to promote gender equality. These policies offer fiscal suggestions to the United States government on how to fund educational programs in underdeveloped countries. Policy development should recognize the major issues of school security, teacher quality, and unequal attendance rates between genders. While acknowledging these concerns, the following policy recommendations endeavor to promote tangible programs

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that are focused on equal access to information. First, the government should sponsor NGOs that distribute reliable technology that can be used for educational purposes, should local infrastructure support these technologies. Such hardware can only contribute to education when utilized properly. One project that has shown particular potential is One Laptop Per Child which distributes durable and environmentally friendly laptops that are pre-loaded with educational programs. The project has been particularly active in Latin America, where both male and female literacy rates have shown positive growth.\(^8\) One Laptop Per Child is currently promoting the education of young girls. At $199 per laptop, this recommendation is fiscally feasible.\(^8\)

Secondly, financial incentives should be provided to grassroots organizations disseminating educational information through SMS messaging. ENEZA Education\(^9\) has had great success in Kenya offering lessons and quizzes over SMS messages. One of the main advantages of this recommendation is that SMS messaging is more readily available in many regions than accessible internet connections. Such programs have the most impact on female entrepreneurs who gain mobility from cellular technology and report financial benefits from these programs: “Everybody uses cell phones, even market women and all. These programs promote education, agency, and financial independence for women.

The third policy recommendation supports NGOs and grassroots organizations providing free online educational videos. Two programs in place that could have a greater impact with increased funding are the Khan Academy and the Guru-g company\(^9\), which operates specifically in India. With internet accessibility these videos offer women information on a wide breadth of subjects regardless of available institutions. Like the other two institutional policies suggested, the videos offer girls and women opportunities to expand both their knowledge and income potential. Cumulatively these recommendations make education more accessible and stable given the myriad of circumstances that challenge formal institutions.

**Family Involvement in Education**

Families provide the earliest and most basic form of education to children. Early on, children are influenced by norms set by families and communities. When parents (or guardians) are involved in children’s schools, schools are more likely to be held accountable for performance and, consequently, quality tends to improve. Involved families also encourage children to be enthusiastic learners and strong students. However, many families around the world do not have the opportunity to send their children to school, let alone be involved in school life, due to financial difficulties. Oftentimes when financial resources are limited, the education of young

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\(^9\) One Laptop per Child, laptop.org


boys is prioritized over that of girls. This stifles national economies by eliminating half of the potential skilled workforce. When girls have access to education, they are given the tools to participate in the world economy.

To increase the likelihood of girls’ access to education, we recommend a policy of both Conditional Cash Transfers (CCTs) and Adult Education to underdeveloped countries. These programs will seek to alleviate the financial stress of sending children to school and empower women so that they may gain access to economic markets that their male counterparts currently possess. We recommend the promotion of CCTs for female primary education. Families would only be eligible to receive funds by agreeing to send their female children to school; funds would discontinue should this pledge be broken. Money would be distributed every two months, and would cease as soon as the conditions were not met. We believe CCTs should be used over Unconditional Cash Transfers (UCTs) because of CCTs significant effect on improving long-term educational outcomes. UCTs, on the other hand, have a greater effect on short-term poverty reduction.92 CCTs have proved extremely effective in increasing school enrollment.93 A study by The University of Otago shows that CCTs with a condition of mandatory school attendance boosted enrollment by 60%.94 Programs such as Oportunidades in Mexico, Bolsa Família in Brazil, Abriendo Oportunidades in Guatemala and Give Directly in Kenya serve as excellent examples of successful CCT programs. These programs have positive effects not only for the education of children, but for the livelihood of families as well. For example, the Give Directly Program in Kenya has improved child nutrition, increased livestock holdings and household incomes, and decreased family stress.95 In general, CCTs have been proven to be effective in reducing poverty and increasing school attendance.96

To support these programs, we recommend that developing nations pair with local private companies in order to secure funding. While misuse of these funds will inevitably occur, this is not the case with the vast majority of recipients.97 If women have access to personal income, they may be at risk of domestic violence and familial unrest. This issue should be closely monitored and addressed as needed, preferably through grassroots initiatives.

In addition to CCTs, we propose that the U.S. promote Adult Education programs. These programs could take a variety of forms based on community preferences, but should be able to provide adults with enough knowledge to assist their primary school students with homework and to set an example of school attendance. For some communities, adults may be able to enroll in formal institutions. If this opportunity is not available, we recommend that the U.S. assist in

93 Ibid.
94 Ibid.
95 Ibid.
the development of programs that allow primary school teachers to provide parents with an overview of what their children were being taught each week. As seen with newly literate parents in Nepal and Bangladesh, adult education enables parents to assist their children with education, while improving their own economic circumstances. Ultimately, adult education paired with primary education for women and girls has the potential to lift the entire family out of poverty and will give women the tools they need to be productive contributors to the economy.

**Opportunities for the future**

Education of the future generation is important because it encourages prosperity and development of women and the entire country. Not only does this long-term approach seek to strengthen women’s role in economic development, it is accompanied by the inherent benefits of women’s education. It is difficult for female students to stay in school due to a lack of short term benefits. Many cultural norms do not value female education. Females may also face pressure from their families to stay home and help run the household or enter into a marriage.

Women are disproportionately affected by child rearing. Pregnancy and motherhood limit women’s access to educational opportunities. Economic challenges make formal education appear unrewarding in spite of long term benefits. The future generation needs more short-term benefits to entice them to continue education. One remedy is finding and funding ways for men and women in developing countries to gain access to basic cellular phones, and to include instruction on their potential uses. With a more accessible way to communicate, men and women can educate themselves in a variety of situations on different topics, from skill based training to collective engagement.

Both women and girls would benefit from increased access to paid internships. Working with community members to provide subsidized internships will encourage businesses to employ students. It will also give female students a financial incentive to continue education. Such opportunities that benefit future generations are crucial for ensuring equal economic status for females. Opportunity driven incentives encourage youth to play an active role in their education while earning an income. These incentives provide grassroots organizations the ability to promote progressive change designed to reflect cultural values. This policy suggests that governments regulate incentives that encourage the next generation to pursue education.

**Conclusion**

All of these policy recommendations have highlighted the importance of directly funding grassroots organizations that focus on promoting women’s equality and education. Ensuring females equal access to education fosters economic development by increasing the skilled workforce. Education can shift cultural norms and is a catalyst for women’s empowerment.

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These policies for the United States government offer recommendations that reflect the interconnected influences on education: community, formal institutions, family involvement, and the future generation. Economic constraints, prevailing cultural norms, and other factors related to these influences, all pose unique obstacles to female education. None of these policies can eliminate such obstacles. A multifaceted approach can, however, focus funding and outreach so that it avoids such obstacles whenever possible. All of these recommendations are cognizant of these challenges and tailors programs to address geographic, demographic, and socioeconomic variables. Regardless of the hurdles faced when supporting programs for female education the benefits far outweigh these difficulties. Increased education fosters economic growth for women and their communities. It also offers subsequent positive effects related to health and welfare and creates a ripple effect of societal development.