INTRODUCTION: THE JPRI NETWORK

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This issue of *Asia Pacific Peace Studies* features some of the best recent articles and essays by members of the JPRI Network. JPRI was founded in 1994 by the eminent scholar and public intellectual Chalmers Johnson, with his wife, the anthropologist Sheila K. Johnson, and Steven C. Clemons, most recently executive vice president of the New America Foundation and now Washington editor-at-large for *The Atlantic*. Although Chalmers Johnson sadly passed away in 2010, we at the Asia Pacific Peace Studies Institute (APPSI) at Holy Names University in Oakland, California, are honored to help preserve his legacy and continue his important work. APPSI maintains the JPRI Archive, promotes Chalmers Johnson's many books, and collects new works for publication under the JPRI banner.

What does JPRI publish? While JPRI—originally, Japan Policy Research Institute—emphasizes critical perspectives on political economy and security issues, it also has been dedicated to exploring topics more commonly associated with social justice and environmental protection, especially in connection to U.S. military bases in Japan and throughout the world. In other words, JPRI has never focused exclusively on Japan (or even U.S.-Japan Relations) and industrial policies, export trade, security treaties, and so forth. Affiliated scholars, policymakers, journalists, and activists in the JPRI Network address a wide range of topics covering various communities in the Pacific Rim and even further afield. Thus readers will find in the present issue of *Asia Pacific Peace Studies* articles, reviews, and commentaries pertaining not only to the United States and Japan but also North Korea, China, Hong Kong, Macau, France, Germany, and Iran.

The opening article in this issue is "The End of Privacy: 9/11 and the Ascendancy of the Surveillance State" by Richard M. Abrams, professor emeritus of history at UC Berkeley. Abrams masterfully contextualizes a troubling political development of the past decade and a half in the broader sweep of U.S. constitutional history, social and cultural transformations, and technological advances. And in so doing, Abrams reveals the weakness of countervailing forces to arrest the rise of the "surveillance state." Following a survey of various "misbegotten 'national security' measures" in the wake of 9/11, Abrams offers a "Brief History of Privacy Rights" in which he demonstrates that "privacy has never been a strong American suit." In another section of the article, "Social & Technological Changes Inimical to Privacy," Abrams explains how advances in information and communication technology (*i.e.*, the internet, GPS, exponential gains

in storage and processing capacities) have combined with corporate practices like data mining and cultural phenomena such as reality TV and ubiquitous social media to create a society in which few seem to really care about the government's "sweeping assault on privacy." This is a disturbing conclusion to be sure, but one which the author hopes will serve as a clarion call for us to cast off complacency and actively defend hard-won civil liberties. Earlier this year Congress missed a golden opportunity to reform the surveillance law; legislators voted to extend for six year the highly controversial Section 702 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act. Civil society leaders must mobilize to prevent further extensions.

The next article is "An Isolated Anachronism: North Korea" by Kongdan (Katy) Oh, former senior fellow at the Brookings Institution and policy analyst at the RAND Corporation, and now Senior Asia Specialist at the Institute for Defense Analyses. Like the first article in this issue, this one also offers important historical and political-economic context for understanding recent events. In this case, the new phenomenon in question is the sudden shift by North Korea from the "confrontational" stance of the past couple of years (underscored by testing of nuclear weapons and long-range missiles) to a diplomatic "charm offensive" (marked by a halt in weapons testing and a flurry of summit meetings between North Korean Supreme Leader Kim Jong-un and other leaders in the Asia-Pacific region—notably, President Trump). After outlining three generations of hereditary leadership by the Kim family, Oh briefly discusses the economic situation and social changes in North Korea. She contends, for example, that "money has become the new status symbol in North Korean society, replacing Party membership and education" and "respect toward the ruling Kim family has waned [and] sentiment toward the third Kim is especially negative." Ending with a consideration of "future prospects," she states that the "most favorable scenario for Kim Jong-un would see him keeping control of society and making a deal with the United States to keep what nuclear weapons he now has, while freezing nuclear weapons development." It follows that President Trump and his foreign policy advisors should proceed cautiously. His eagerness to "make a deal" may inadvertently prolong the division of the Korean peninsula and strengthen control in the north by a dictatorial, nuclear-armed regime.

The third article—"A Tale of Two Ex-Colonial Cities: Hong Kong and Macau"—by Suzanne Pepper continues the theme of analyzing current political challenges in historical context. Pepper, an accomplished scholar and honorary fellow at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, furthermore views ongoing unrest in Hong Kong through a comparative lens, contrasting Macau's and Hong Kong's respective paths to political integration with China according to the "one country, two systems" formula. She points out subtle but "surely significant distinctions" between the Basic Laws (governing constitutions) of the two cities. Notably, Article 68 of Hong Kong's Basic Law states that the "ultimate aim is the election of all the members of the Legislative Council by universal suffrage" whereas the comparable article in Macau's Basic Law says only that

the "majority of [its legislature's] members shall be elected." Pepper traces this distinction to the colonial past.

> Hong Kong may have been the only British colony that was never allowed popular representation in government. But that ideal of popular representation was always present, given Britain's own nineteenth- and twentieth-century electoral reform movements. In colonial Hong Kong, no decade passed without someone raising the issue. By the 1960s, it finally seemed set for a breakthrough—until the 1967 riots in Hong Kong provided the powers-that-be in London and Hong Kong with another excuse to shelve the idea. London was then left with the uncomfortable option of leaving its colonial Hong Kong population to fend for itself—without the tradition, precedents, or experience that might be used as protection from whatever might follow under Beijing's post-1997 rule. Hence London conceded to a better-late-than-never political reform project.

Article 68 of Hong Kong's Basic Law reflects many generations of political activism and aspirations that officials in Beijing cannot simply wish away. Taking this long view, it is understandable that China's "8.31 decision" (of August 31, 2014)—which dashed Hong Kong residents' hopes for direct election of their Chief Executive in 2017 and of Legislative Council members by 2020—"sent protestors out into the streets in what would become a 79-day occupation of major thoroughfares throughout the city." Beijing miscalculated. According to Pepper, "the entire democracy movement has shifted direction"—no longer stopping at calls for universal suffrage within the "one country, two systems" framework, and now debating visions of "self-determination."

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The present issue of *Asia Pacific Peace Studies* concludes with a collection of shorter pieces. This section features a powerful commentary—"The Test Trump Failed"—by James Fallows, acclaimed writer and national correspondent for *The Atlantic*. Fallows reminds us that a "disproportionate amount of what we *remember* about presidents has to do with how they respond to the unforeseen." He notes, moreover, that our leaders "have a particular burden, and responsibility, when the nation as a whole has suffered a shock, wound, or shame." Laudable examples for Fallows include President Ronald Reagan's Oval Office speech following the space shuttle *Challenger* disaster in 1986 and President Barack Obama's "Amazing Grace" address after the racist mass shooting in 2015 at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina. The world shall not easily forget, in a different sense, Donald Trump's ignominious response to neo-Nazi violence in Charlottesville, Virginia.

The second piece—Dominic Fusco's review of *The Golden Land of Myanmar* by Buddhist nun Daw Sanda Wadi (formerly Shoshana Cathy Korson)—provides a shift in tone. The film captures the rhythms of daily life in a small village in Suvarnabhumi in the Mon State of southern Myanmar. Fusco the travel writer is drawn to "panorama shots of plush mountains, sprawling rice terraces, and golden sunsets [that] confirm an environment of immense natural beauty; a serene place where 'ritual, reverence, routine, and timelessness' reign supreme." But Fusco also serves as news editor of *World Politics Review*. And from this vantage point, he brings us back to history and socio-political context: "Myanmar for decades has experienced a brutal civil—a situation fraught with constant instability, violent ethnic tensions, and myriad violations of human rights. If Suvanarbhumi is indeed a Garden of Eden in the twenty-first century, we are given little account of the belly of the beast in which it lies."

Next, JPRI co-founder Sheila K. Johnson offers an extended review of *The Politics of Work-Family Policies: Comparing Japan, France, Germany, and the United States*. Johnson finds in this book by Purdue University political scientist Patricia Boling a wealth of insights on "not only how… these countries provide for children of working women, but how… these solutions [are] constrained by cultural norms and political choices." For example, we learn that Germany offers "a mixed system of support for working families" featuring direct monthly payments to families with children along with government-subsidized early childhood centers (for children under 3 years of age). Interestingly, attendance at these centers varies quite dramatically by region and across states. These variances are explained by state funding decisions within a federal system and by "attitudes prevailing in the Catholic versus secular or Lutheran parts" of the country. The comparative perspective is quite revealing as well. Johnson notes a chart in which "Boling tracks maternity, parental, and paternity leaves for her four nations plus Sweden."

> Here France, Sweden, and Germany all come out rather similar on length of maternity leave (14-16 weeks) at full or 80 percent pay. Japan gives women 14 weeks of maternity leave at 67 percent of pay, but as Boling has indicated elsewhere, only 24.2 percent of Japan's working women who become pregnant take advantage of maternity leave. The rest "retire," meaning they leave the work force indefinitely. And then we come to the United States, where most of the columns are zeros! The United States guarantees workers (in firms that employ 50 or more people) 12 weeks of parental leave, period—at no percentage of their pay. This is, indeed, rampant capitalism and individualism at work.

Though Japan lags behind Europe, it is the United States that has much to learn from the rest of the industrialized world.

The last contribution is "Trump's Iranian Diktat" by Ibrahim Warde of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, who is an expert on international finance—especially, informal and underground finance in the Islamic world. In this commentary, Warde evaluates President Trump's efforts to apply "the methods he had perfected as a real estate developer and reality television star to international relations." Predictably, this has involved abrupt firings and reneging on agreements. Both former Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and former National Security Advisor General H. R. McMaster were pushed out in spring 2018 and replaced by hawks, Mike Pompeo and John Bolton, who supported President Trump's campaign promise to back out of the "horrible" Iran nuclear deal. Warde points out that "Iran, though often regarded as a rogue state, has respected the terms of the deal, as confirmed by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and regular certification from the U.S. government." Ultimately, Warde invokes statesmen of years past to remind us that "history clearly shows the threat unilateralism poses to U.S. interests."

> In 1997 Zbigniew Brzezinski, Brent Scowcroft and Richard Murphy (close diplomatic advisers of Presidents Carter, Bush and Clinton) warned: "The policy of unilateral U.S. sanctions against Iran has been ineffectual, and the attempt to coerce others into following America's lead has been a mistake. Extraterritorial bullying has generated needless friction between the United States and its chief allies and threatened the international free trade order that America has promoted for so many decades."

As much as we at *Asia Pacific Peace Studies* object to various policies of previous U.S. administrations and many aspects of the prevailing "free trade" regime, we firmly agree that the Trump administration's "extraterritorial bullying" and unilateralism neither advance the interests of the great majority of Americans nor make the world safer and more just. All advocates of intercultural communication and positive peace must insist on more sensible actions from foreign policy leaders.[1]

NOTES

[1] Johan Galtung, a pioneer in the field of peace and conflict studies, distinguished between "negative peace" and "positive peace." Whereas the former means the absence of war and armed fighting, the latter signifies the presence of important values such as favoring cooperation over confrontation and a commitment to justice, equality, pluralism, and diversity.