



“The U.S. in a 21st Century World: Do We Have What It Takes?”

February 17, 18, 19, 2012

Suggested Summer Reading for the 25th annual Camden Conference

Here are four books dealing with our 2012 conference theme you might choose for summer reading. Which to choose depends on your interests particularly regarding the “*Do We Have What It Takes*” part of our theme:

Zakaria, Fareed. (2011). *The Post-American World, Release 2.0*. Norton.

This updated and expanded edition of his original 2008 version of *The Post-American World* is essential reading even for those who read his first work.

The Post-American World, Release 2.0, points to the need for America to adopt new ways of doing business with the world, one that is based on "consultation, cooperation, and even compromise" as opposed to go-it-alone unilateralism. American success in the 21st century will depend on how these newly ascendant powers also will be integrated into existing institutions such as the G8, the IMF, the World Bank, and the WTO.

Fareed Zakaria's latest, *The Post-American World, Release 2.0*, provided the best overview of a possible world in which we might move. For years we were the global leader, not just in military power, but also in economics, politics, science and culture. Our influence was broad. Earlier our influence was high. But as countries such as China and others are rapidly developing, all that may change, particularly as a multipolar leadership world emerges, all as we struggle to recover from a huge financial crisis, which was mostly of our own making. Zakaria puts this all into perspective. His book is almost essential reading. He has all the top issues covered, but he may be too optimistic on how we and others might respond.

Kissinger, Henry. (2011). *On China*. Penguin Press HC

In this sweeping and insightful history, Henry Kissinger turns for the first time at book-length to a country he has known intimately for decades, and whose modern relations with the West he helped shape. Drawing on historical records as well as his conversations with Chinese leaders over the past forty years, Kissinger examines how China has approached diplomacy, strategy, and negotiation throughout its history, and reflects on the consequences for the global balance of power in the 21st century. From publisher.

Henry Kissinger's *On China* may very well know more about what we now believe will be our number one competitor.

McGregor, Richard. (2010). *The Party: The Secret World of China's Communist Rulers*. Harper.

McGregor, a journalist at the Financial Times, begins his revelatory and scrupulously reported book with a provocative comparison between China's Communist Party and the Vatican for their shared cultures of secrecy, pervasive influence, and impenetrability. The author pulls back the curtain on the Party to consider its influence over the industrial economy, military, and local governments. McGregor describes a system operating on a Leninist blueprint and deeply at odds with Western standards of management and transparency. From Publishers Weekly.

For those of you interested in how a communist government can lead a huge nation to a global leadership position and influence, Richard McGregor's, *The Party*, might be your choice.

Spence, Michael. (2011). *The Next Convergence: The Future of Economic Growth in a Multispeed World*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

With the British Industrial Revolution, part of the world's population started to experience extraordinary economic growth—leading to enormous gaps in wealth and living standards between the industrialized West and the rest of the world. This pattern of divergence reversed after World War II, and now we are midway through a century of high and accelerating growth in the developing world and a new convergence with the advanced countries—a trend that is set to reshape the world. From publisher.

Nobel Laureate Michael Spence, in *The Next Convergence*, presents a perspective on several previous global leading organizations – and how they rose and fell....and how we stand now. Although his interests also focus on what's ahead for developing countries, his observations for us and other developed countries are equally relevant. His observations for developed countries and what's ahead for us start mid-book, on chapter 23.

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Some additional suggestions:

Kishore Mahbubani's "The New Asian Hemisphere, The Irresistible Shift of Power to the East," (2008) is a good refresher of how a leading Asian sees us and a changing world. And Bill Emmot's "Rivals" (also 2008) explores all leadership possibilities. He was editor of *The Economist*. In "Zero-Sum Future: American Power in an Age of Anxiety," (2011), Gideon Rachman provides us with a sober view of where things stand and possible outcomes. He's Chief Foreign Affairs columnist for the Financial Times.

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Early this Fall, after our full program is created, we'll offer a longer list of book suggestions. Reader suggestions always welcomed: smdb@samfeltom.com, your program Committee's booklist editor.