

## **Editorial Foreword**

The American elections of 2008 have dominated the attention of most Americans, including political scientists, during the time that this issue of the journal has been produced. Fortunately, they have not preoccupied political science scholars to the exclusion of all other subjects and fields of the discipline. Nonetheless, for the truly thoughtful observer, thinking about the broader issues and world that the next president and other officials will address is an ongoing process. This issue of the journal facilitates that process.

If the world was changed by the events of 2001 in America, it is possible that the world will be transformed by the decisions of 2008 by Americans. Therefore, understanding the ideas, as well as the situations, connected with this potentially crucial period of history is particularly important at this time. This issue addresses race relations (obviously relevant to this particular election season), instability in southern Asia, and the position of Republicans in Massachusetts. In addition to the article on the political and legislative competition of the Bay State, the State Reports section of this issue of the journal offers overviews of the ongoing political situation in both Connecticut and Vermont, both in anticipation of, and as a reflection upon, the 2008 state and federal elections within the United States.

Bilal Sekou's article on the relationship of different types of social and political associations to changing racial relations in American society is particularly prescient. It reflects shifting experiences at a time when attitudes toward race within the United States are particularly interesting and, arguably, transitional. Maurice Cunningham's article on the reaction of the Republican

Party of Massachusetts to the increased dominance of the state's Democratic Party parallels a national trend and reflects, at the state level, considerations that are being addressed within other states and at the federal level as well. Rajesh Kumar offers an excellent evaluation of the strategic controversy facing Pakistan and India. His use of the stability/instability paradox to assess this volatile situation comes at a particularly important time, especially considering both the general strategic significance of India and the particular role of Pakistan in the conflict with the Taliban and its effect upon the precarious condition of Afghanistan. Clyde McKee's typically excellent and interesting overview of the political situation in Connecticut in the run-up to the 2008 election reflects the best ideal of this journal's State Reports section, especially in addressing the significance and peculiarities of New England.

This issue of *The New England Journal of Political Science* continues its mission to provide a critical and high-quality venue for a wide array of social science scholarship. It also advances its mission of offering a special place for scholarship relating to this region of the country that might, otherwise, not fit into other political science journals. It also continues to offer a special section on the politics of the region and its states that reflects the context of the association that it serves. Everyone associated with it hopes that its readers will continue to be satisfied with its fulfillment of those aspects of its mission.