

Good foreign affairs essay example

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Thesis: Increased American vigour in relation to foreign affairs was informed by some factors such as the World Wars

The United States of America has seen evolved and changed its foreign affairs and policies from the year 1865 to the present day and age. There are events and development sin the world that made it necessary for the US to adapt and revitalize its foreign affairs policies over time. This evolution saw the US rise from the isolationist or non-interference country to a hands-on super power. For the purpose of this essay, I will discuss some of the major events and developments that have landmarked the United States of America foreign policy. In principle, the changes in tone, action and position of in the foreign affairs department was occasioned by global matters and factors that accrued at that point in time.

Most of these policies are geared towards liberal internationalism, combating international acts terror, offering humanitarian aid and supporting during times of crisis. It is worth to mention that foreign affair department has strived to promote global democracy, a strong world economy and initiation of development projects and programmes in third world countries (Bradley & Flaherty, 2004, P. 550). Below in here, I will discuss the major events that prompted the United States of America to revitalise its foreign policies and relationship from a nation that was little interested in global matters-zero interference policy to a country that has a grip on world matters.

Secondly, America moved from its wait and see position to offer military support and cooperation to combat the “ common enemy.” This was the building blocks of the notion of military cooperation, and support by the

American government to aid its allies fight its enemy or help is quelling the threats of a common enemy (Goldsmith, 1997, 1622). In the modern day and age, on several occasions and instances, the US has offered military support to help fight terrorists and insurgents who threaten to disrupt peace of legitimate governments or civilian populations. At times, America lends its marines to go for peacekeeping missions in Africa and other parts of the world. In principle, the First World War changed the United States of America policy on international matters, from a neutral player to a country that is fully involved on global matters, even those outside its territorial waters. Additionally, economic growth and transformation contributed to America's surge to help it become a global partner and stakeholder in global matters. Subsequently, after the cessation of hostilities and the eventual formation of the United Nations as a neutral arbiter and encompassing body to resolve global matters, in light of good faith, America deployed ambassadors and foreign missions. It had emissaries in almost each and every country in the world, where the United States of America felt that it had strategic interests. After some time, Americans moved and lived in many other countries, and made wealth in those respective countries. The formation of the League of Nations and later the United Nations as the single most oversight body in global matters, allowed countries to show good faith to the other countries by setting up embassies.

One of the primary duties of those foreign missions, ambassadors and emissaries were to protect the interests' of Americans in foreign soils. Most importantly, was the protection of commercial interests of Americans and the federal government in foreign soils. Over the years, the United States of

America has seen an increase in its nationals serving or working in different countries of the world (Kennedy, 1976, p. 199). Part of the work of ambassadors and those foreign missions are to ensure that American citizens in whichever part of the world have their rights and freedoms protected. It is clear that since 1865, and the formation of United Nations has seen many Americans move to work to other countries and is entitled to the same if not better treatment in terms of working conditions and terms of employment.

It is impossible to monitor and bargain for the rights and freedoms of Americans in foreign soils from an abstract position. Therefore, before America issues advisories to the citizens, it must be informed and base on solid grounds of certainty. For instance, during elections in emerging democracies, America sets up election observers and analysts to advise on the situation. This means that from 1865, America has increased its span of care from the territorial waters of the United States of America to all countries in the world where American citizens are. The formation of the League of Nations and subsequent United Nations was a major development that informed the United States of America's foreign affairs in terms of policies.

The Second World War presented another hallmark opportunity for America to review its foreign affairs policies during the period of 1945-to-1950.

Following a botched attempt by President Woodrow Wilson to form the League of Nations and failure by the United States of America's congress to ratify its joining, this was another chance. It is imperative to mention that the almost the same causes as those of First World War caused the Second

World War. These included blockades, ill-feelings and suspicions, neutrality and others were some of the mistakes which were recorded in the first attempt to unify the world. The inability of United States of America to join the League of Nation meant that the US could not respect and uphold the treaties and /or recommendations that accrued from it. Having this background in mind, the United States of America was instrumental in the formation of the effective United Nations alongside other members. The primary role was to have world peace. Therefore, the United States of America was given the veto power alongside four other countries. This means that the United States of America is a signatory and member state of the United Nations, and it is bound by all the resolutions, conventions and/or treaties (LaFeber, 1989, p. 374).

This was a show of good faith and confidence in international treaties and conventions. Being a veto power or member and one of the founder members, it would be impossible for the United States of America to ignore or snub at the very minimum the resolutions made by the United Nations councils or its subsidiaries. Unlike in the period prior to 1865 where the United States of America pursued isolationist policy and a non-interference approach to world matters, the immediate period after the Second World War, the United States of America became a global participant. The effects and the basic occurrence of the Second World War presented the United States of America with an opportunity to review its foreign policy and affairs. In the present day and age, it is important to mention that the United States of America is a compliant member states and signatory to the conventions and treaties that are resolved by the various United Nations councils.

The world has witnessed a rise in the number of civil wars and civilian unrests due to varied reasons. Some civil wars have been necessitated by pro-democracy riots or demand for rights from various to their governments. The irreducible minimum and the common denominator are the victims of these wars, which is mostly comprised of by women and young children. The United States of America as the super power of the world has taken its rightful place in providing humanitarian aid and care to the victims of wars, or protection to the vulnerable groups' even before a likely war commences. Failure by the United States of America to intervene during civil wars led to a backlash and holistic blame shifted to centre of power in Washington. A practical case is the Rwandan genocide during the tenure and administration of President Bill Clinton. Critics did question the role of United States of America as a superpower in trying to stop the genocide or protect the vulnerable groups. After this event, the federal government saw the renewed urge help avert any possible future massacres all over the world especially in developing democracies.

Since that period of 1994, the US government has had an increased vigour and interest in trying to protect not only American citizens in the respective areas where conflicts occur, but the vulnerable groups such as women, children, the elderly, the sick amongst others. By and large, the United States of America's government has moved in to avert fatalities of the vulnerable groups during the war (Perkins, 1995, p. 1782). A recent instance is during the war in Sudan, Africa- has sent marines to protect hospitals and concentration camps of women, children and the elderly.

Terrorism especially the 9/11 attack was a tipping point on how the United

States of America allowed its troops to invade foreign soils. As much as the United Nations has laid grounds for doing so, the US has its own threshold under which to act if it deems necessary. If the US is convinced that a terror suspect or a terrorist who has maimed Americans is hiding in a place, the US would stealthily move to that place and arrest or kill that particular person. The overriding policy here is “ the enemy is an enemy regardless of the jurisdiction that he lies in, that enemy ought to be apprehended.” A practical example is when the US navy SEALs entered Abbottabad in Pakistan and killed Osama Bin Laden. This was a unilateral decision that was sanctioned by Washington DC and the US did not need the authority of the United Nations or the host country to find and kill the enemy (Parkes, 1953). I can argue that this move into Pakistan was occasioned by the change of the United States of America’s foreign policy due to terror acts on the US soil especially the 9/11 tragedy.

The period from 1941-to-1990, was characterised by non-violent warfare or the bloodless battles popular known as the cold war. This was a battle of military and economic sabotage where the US and its allies ganged up against the Soviet Union. As much as there were other diplomatic and major reasons to advance the same, one of the outstanding reasons for the US participating was because Soviet Union advanced communism. In principle, communism was opposing the US imperialistic tendencies (Schlesinger, 1951, p. 1871). Thus, at that time, the US found reasons to advance and “ kill” communism that was different from the policy that the United States of America was advancing at that time. Over the years, the US as a leader of democracy has supported democratic tendencies all over the world and on

the same breadth opposed dictatorial regimes.

This logic means that the US has renewed its foreign affairs policy to advance its liberal policies which include good governance, democracy, humanitarian aid, human rights care amongst others. In the recent past, the United States of America has renewed its pledge and policies to ensure that the best humane practises for all people around the globe. Through its programs and financial aid to developing democracies, the US presumes that it would impact the good democratic practise to those countries.

Conclusion

In the above essay, I have discussed the fundamental events and happenings that have changed the United States of America's foreign affairs policies. From the time of 1865-to-today, the US has had renewed vigour on how it approaches its foreign affairs and issues. Initially, the US fronted isolationist policy of neutrality and non-interference, but the major events and development discussed above here in prompted the US to change, revise and revitalise its foreign affairs policies to the current state of being a superpower in global matters. The main events that the change were the First World War, the formation of the United Nations, the Second World War, the Increase in the number of civil wars around the world, the cold War and increase in acts of terrorism (Wilson, 1987). All these events and developments have uniquely and individually influenced and revitalized the United States of America from the neutral and isolated nation to the current hands nation. In brief, the US has changed its policy structure from the initial one where it was solely concerned with the welfare and wellbeing of Americans within the American soil. Later, that care and interest grew to

Americans in foreign soils and eventually it has reached a level where the US is concerned with the welfare of global citizens.

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