

# The power of the united states in decline politics essay



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The United States power and its economic rank in the world are at such a prestige level, as said by McWilliams and Piotrowski " after the world war II, the United States, the world's only economic super power assisted west Germany and Japan in their economic recovery and provided them security"(). This above statement just shows us the power of the United States in the economic aspect at their ability in assisting two countries after a war. In order to give a better and more reasonable explanation to this specific question, we have decided to first view the way power is portrayed in politics and more specifically in the global perspective at to this we shall explain the term ' decline' as it concerns the position of power. Power in a political analysis is usually " thought of as a relationship which is the ability to influence the behaviour of others or even a nation in a manner not of their choosing" (Heywood 2000: 35). As given example by Andrew Heywood he explains that power only appears when one person makes another individual to do anything they might not have interest into (Heywood 2000: 35). Likewise from Peter Joyce point of view she sees politics in the form of power to be more of a " relationship between two parties in which one has the ability to compel the other to undertake a course of action involuntarily" (Peter 2000: 7). As we can see power is the central concept of politics and its discipline " is the capacity to produce intended effects, It is in short the ability to get what one wants" (Thiele, 1997: 53). The nature of power is an important matter when it comes to world politics. The form of power which could either be ' hard' power as is evident in the use of force or ' soft' power which is used by a country " in achieving its goal by attracting rather than coercing others" (McConnell et al 2008: 17). Moving on towards the main term of this is essay which is ' decline', the author Itzkoff gave an <https://assignbuster.com/the-power-of-the-united-states-in-decline-politics-essay/>

explanation of the term decline in which he stated that “ decline can be confirmed by any of the criteria that historians have ever used to measure the state and condition of a nation and its people”. The fundamental concerns of a decline in a nation which are mostly in a more important position, when looking at this question are politics, economics and military power (itzkoff 1994: 3). With the above definition of the term power and decline, we can see that the United States is not in any way facing the characteristics it shows us in the explanation of the term ‘ decline’. So with that much being said we can see that the United States is not in any chance declining in power.

At the end of the cold war the United States of America became a superpower. Its power and stability just kept on escalating, in 1990’s when the cold war came to an end, by that period the United States was reportedly estimated to have about 30 per cent of the global economic output (). If we look at the world order which is in place right now, which constitutes of a remarkable number of democratic countries, we can see that it exhibits the United States principle and advancement, and it was all created and guarded by the United States power in all its economic, political and military dimensions, which means if there is a decline in the United States power, the world order will also decline with it. We belief that even with diminished American power “ the underlying foundations of the liberal international order will survive and thrive,” as the political scientist G. John Ikenberry has argued, is a pleasant illusion. The United States decline, if it is real, will mean a different world for everyone ().

From a book by Thomas Friedman in which it tittles " that used to be us". It explains that most of the reviews on the declination of power in the United States are mostly from careless reasoning, on feelings that the United States as a nation has lost its charm, that it has rejected the integrity that brought them such success in the past, that it does not have the will to approach the difficulties that lay ahead of them (). The problem is that the citizens of the United States view other countries whose economic development are now in a much better situation than their own, and seem to gain the enthusiasm that the United States once had, and they now grieve about it.

Just as one swallow does not make a spring, so that's why we believe that one recession or even an oppressive economic catastrophe cannot mean that it is the beginning of a massive declination of a great power such as the united States. For example the united states have experienced a continued and a deep economic catastrophe in the 1890s, the 1930s, and the 1970s (). In each situation we can see that in a decade or so, they have comeback and even being in a better position. By the year 1910, the 1940s and the 1980s were all proves of the United States strong influence and global power. With that much being said this essay will now discuss in proving that the United States of America is still at the manifesting of staying a superpower nation. We shall look at the three major aspect of being superpower nation, which includes its economy, their military dimension and finally in politics. With these three aspects we can now prove that United States is not in the decline rather is soaring high.

To start with the three major aspects which will be used in this essay to

prove that the United States is not declining in power is one of the basic <https://assignbuster.com/the-power-of-the-united-states-in-decline-politics-essay/>

indicators which are the economic aspect. Regardless of the situation the United States been in the previous years, which includes a reduction of business activity and a slow development, the United States ranking in the entire globe has not alternated. The United States share of the world's gross domestic product (GDP) has held exceptionally stable, not only for ten years but for over forty years. In a record by the year 1969, most of the world's economic output was generated by the United States (). The United States till date still generate somewhere around a quarter, and it is regarded as not only one of the biggest but also one of the wealthiest economy in the world. Most of this economic background and development started when " the collapse of communism occur, the US has achieved maximum influence in international economic affairs at minimum cost. The goal of governing the international economy, in addition to benefits it brings to the United States economic interest, is also to provide an opportunity to promote American values". (Singh 2003: 298). Looking in towards the economic perspective we shall have a glimpsed of how powerful the U. S dollar is. As said by Singh " The dollar is the largest traded international currency, is accepted for payment by cooperation worldwide, and held by government and companies in their reserves. All of the world's trade in oil takes place in U. S dollars, a measure of the currency's dominance and universal acceptability" (Singh 2003: 263). An example of how influential the US dollar is when the WTO came to existence it had some financial problems but as stated by Singh, he explains that " The global dimension of United States trade policy in the 1990s revolved around the world trade organization (WTO). The road to the creation of the WTO was a rocky one but the United States influence was critical, and now the United States has taken the lead in using the WTO as a

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platform for a new, millennium round of trade liberation talks. The United States operates at the centre of an increasingly elaborate network of countries and institutions that have taken responsibility for the management of globalization". (Singh 2003: 295)

One of the reasons some analysts think that the United States' power is declining is because we are captivated by how far the Asian countries have conquered over the years. Countries such as China and India have been gradually climbing up the ladder when it comes to global economy. But when you look back in history we could see that all of its economic development was almost entirely at the cost of Japan and Europe and now it is having a share of a decline in its own economy(). Some enthusiast believes that the development of china's economy might replace the United States position of being a superpower by having the largest economy by approximately the next 20 years. This means that there might be some increase in challenge regarding the economic standard of the United States in the near future. But a nation cannot be measured to be a superpower by only looking at its economical standard. If it was so, then during the 19th century china could have been the predominant power because it had the largest economy but instead some of the European countries were of a higher rank. That's why this essay will move on onto the next aspect mentioned above which is the military power. This shall help us elaborate that a country cannot be a superpower by just having a good economy.

Another major aspect of measuring a nation's power is towards its military capacity. When it comes to the United States it has showed us its superiority when it comes to its defence and military capacity. As stated by McKay in his <https://assignbuster.com/the-power-of-the-united-states-in-decline-politics-essay/>

book ' American politics and society', he said that " over the past seven decade the united states had established a standing and working army of about 200, 000 or even more, adding to that is its foreign alliances it has backing it up" (McKay 2009: 416), which is to be estimated to be around 50 countries with an " unrivalled military and diplomatic status and capacity". (McKay 2009: 416)

As said recently by the dean of the institute of modern international relations, Dr. Yan Xuetong in which he stated that a " military strength underpins hegemony", which means that for a country to be a super power, its military capacity matters too. The United States military capacity as we can see stated above is far more powerful than any other nation. When it comes to the military perspective there has been no decline in its defensive capacity what so ever, well at least not yet. The United States has been estimated to have spent over 500 billion dollars a year on military defence only. This amount is more than what the rest of the super powers spent on defence combined ().

The United States managed to do so by only gaining nothing much than 4 per cent of the annual gross domestic product. Even though it's a higher percentage than most of the super powers, but when you look back in history and compared it you will see that its lower than the 10 per cent of the gross domestic product that the United States had spent on military operation in the mid-1950s and the 7 per cent it had spent in the late 1980s. This maximum and high expenditure shows the United States absolute strength in military effectiveness. Besides it expenditure on its defence, its air force and American army are accoutred with one of the world's most <https://assignbuster.com/the-power-of-the-united-states-in-decline-politics-essay/>

radical weapons, and they are fully experienced and well trained in an actual combat (). With that much experience and equipment the united armed forces can demolish any competitor in a head to head war or battle. The American naval power is still the most predominant in every location of the world. By these military and economic standards the United States is in right now, at least, the United States today is not by any chance like Britain circa 1900, when the Britain's empire's relative decline began to become very visible. It is more like Britain circa 1870, when the empire of Britain was at the peak of its power. It might be possible to imagine a time when this may no longer be the situation, but that moment in the case of United States has not yet appear.

The next aspect of this essay is the political aspect. In which we shall discuss the United States influence around the globe. The way the United States has managed to achieve what it wants in the world because of its value. To start with this aspect we have to keep in mind the even though the United States is a super power, it does not always get what it wants. When you look at today's thoughts about the United States declining in political influence, you will find out that it is mostly inaugurated from a nostalgic bias. All these bias stated that there was a time the United States could get what it wants at any time.

That is why before we start focusing on the United States political influence we have to recognize that the united states past is just a virtual reality. Even though the United States had failed in the past, it did accomplish some very wonderful things in the years of the cold war, and this aspect of the essay will focus on the major creation the united states had managed to  
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accomplish; which include the NATO alliance, the united nations, the Bretton woods economic system and the Marshall plan, and these systems helped the world in both security and economic perspective.

The NATO alliance was a defence agreement, in which the United States played an important role in. The policy of NATO was based on only two major principles. Firstly was to keep a substantial military capacity and strength and also a political unity to block any other type of political influence or pressure or any other form of military trying to invade a member state. The last principle was to reduce the tension between west and east through the use of military strength (). They also agreed that any member states that is being attack is an attack on the entire member states. We believe that the United States is very influential in NATO because as we have said before it contains the largest and most skilful armed force in the world.

Another view on the United States political influence is in the accomplishment of the United Nations. The united nation was established for the purpose of bringing most of the countries of the world together to work together and for the development of the world and peace. The united nation was based on justice and the well-being of all the citizens (). The united states has so much influence in the united nations because the first main plan for a new world organization started in 1939 by the president of the united states: franklin Roosevelt. So we can see that without the United States influence mot of this wonderful establishment won't have been created.