

# Political science



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Selfishness: Naturally, human beings are created with individualistic tendencies and one's interests have to come first. Collectively, the American people, through their government behave the same way and foreign policies reflect this premise. Observation of good faith and justice towards other nations is what the American constitution demand of the US foreign policy but its something that hardly happens. Need to secure American interests for future American generations drives the policies that influence the adoption very biased policies towards other nations.

However, greed works both ways. The rest of the world too does demonstrate selfish tendencies that may make US and other nations for that matter craft protective policies which in effect may look selfish. Besides the basic principle of communism that requires virtually everything to belong to the state largely goes against human nature. Capitalism on the other hand promotes these individualistic tendencies. The spread of communism therefore is not in any way interesting for a capitalist nation like the US.

The greedy and selfish nature of human beings therefore finds its way in the policy making machine of the US and their interests come first and matter most before anyone's. International anarchy: The world is littered with various " hotspots" that are defined by armed and economic conflicts like Darfur Sudan, Middle East and Zimbabwe. Natural resources and the need for separation are mostly the common reasons. More often than not, there is an American element in virtually all of these conflicts. In 1994 for instance the US congress voted for a bill aimed ensuring a US military role in the Bosnian conflict (Simone, 2000, p 186).

The United States considers itself a custodian to world peace and as the world's only Superpower; its leaders always feel they have a moral responsibility to maintain peace in the world. Besides, there is fear among Americans and some developed nations that if the world is allowed to chaotically get out of hand; their countries stand to lose more from such situations than the less developed ones. Therefore, the US foreign policy has been greatly influenced by the anarchic nature of the world so as to establish its dominance through mediation and “ peace making”.

In the conflicts, it's not unusual to find the US playing a covert support role to either side or spearheading reconciliation talks. Congress always votes for billions of dollars in aid to be included in the US Military and Intelligence budget every year. These funds are mostly channeled through the state department to such hot spots for their peace efforts, regime changes, and support for either side which is in line with US, reconstruction efforts or for humanitarian aid. Dominant communist designs: with the collapse of the Soviet Union, many of the states that were under it acquired independence and actively pursued capitalist policies.

However, the continued success of nations like China, Cuba and the apparent stability of North Korea, all of whom practice communism has done little to change the US foreign policies towards communism. The US still maintains the embargo imposed on Cuba, accuses North Korea of developing weapons of mass destruction and suspiciously treats china's actions. The somehow warm relations that Russia maintains with the communist countries, also is a factor in the crafting of US foreign policy. Checking communism's spread or influence is normally the aim of any such policy.

Cuba's bilateral relations with Venezuela for instance have been a point of interest for American foreign policy makers. Communist ideas somehow have found their way to Venezuela with the planned nationalization of all private owned companies in the countries. There is a fear that the role and influence of the US in South America is waning or at least meeting stiff competition from Venezuela which has strong backing from Cuba. Such developments in regard to the spread of communism form a strong basis for the crafting of US foreign policy.

It's like a feeling that the capitalism is challenged hence there is a need to check on the elements of " communist ideologies" by formulating foreign policies which will tend to push for capitalist agendas. Dominant capitalist designs: The US is the world's leading capitalist state and it mostly refers itself as the leader of the free world and guardian of democracy. The fall of communism which was resulted by the Soviet Union Collapse and the fall of the Berlin wall ushered in a new area in US foreign policy.

It was a triumph of " evil" and in that context the US needed to strengthen the capitalism agenda by propagating for democracy in the former Soviet states and other communist countries. Democracy and liberty are the major tools used to ensure the capitalist ideologies are preserved. The need to maintain the status quo by supporting capitalism in any way necessary too does greatly influence US foreign policy. The US to that effect is actively involved in capitalist arrangements like the G7, G8 and G20 groupings which it is influential and dominant.

US's desire to assert leadership and convince the world especially European and Asian economic powerhouses that capitalism is still better and

successful than communism is one of the US foreign policy aims. Foreign Policy view by Democrats (Populists and Elitist) Popular democrats who are viewed as progressive and liberalist tend to portray themselves as being pro-average people and their policies are geared to fight the dominance of status quo. As a result any decision including foreign policy that government makes must resonate with the masses on the ground.

After World War 2 there was a growing concern among populist democrats that the US should formulate foreign policies which would not necessary entail that they would not be involved in future conflicts or intervene unless it was a serious threat to the state. Popular democrats preferred to have negotiations rather than conflicts. They viewed that the average citizens were suffering for situations which could have been avoided. Popular democrats viewed the elitist policies as being self centered and benefiting only a few at the expense of the local citizens.

That's why the Vietnam War after World War 2 was opposed by the popular democrats and other conflicts like in Iraq which the popular democrats said it was sacrificing Americans lives for selfish jingoistic interests. On the other hand Elitist democrats who were mainly conservatives and associated with republicans in US wanted to have strong foreign policies after the World War 2 to ensure the interests of Unites States would be protected at all costs. Maintaining status quo was crucial for them and there was a fear of security concerns always.

For them World War 2 was an important chapter of US foreign policy to strengthen their position at any costs. Military Intervention was crucial component in formulating future foreign policies. There was limited room for

negotiation if US interests were threatened. Negotiation and participation by Americans with potential enemies as fronted by popular democrats was tantamount to being sympathetic to communist ideologies as far as elitist democrats were concerned. In fact for the elitist democrats, they often portrayed the popular democrats as being weak in foreign policies and thus threatening the security stability of the nation.

Other Issues in US Foreign Policies The US can show little justification for its biased approach in foreign policy implementation. In pursuit of American interests, democratically elected governments have been overthrown while repressive regimes have been allowed to exist based on their willingness to cooperate with the Americans. The double standards displayed do no good to the American democratic culture that US seeks to entrench in every part of the world. Aggrieved parties will always be unwilling to cooperate.

President Mubarak of Egypt for instance is classified as an important and strategic ally of the US in its Middle East policy. This support comes despite Mubarak having one of the worst human rights records in the world and has sometimes displayed utter disregard for the constitution of his country yet he remains US ally simply because he gives in to the US demands. On the other hand Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe is and has been a democratically elected leader despite the polls always being hit by irregularities which is normal.

However, he has always faced US and western hostility through sanctions partly because of his land reforms that targeted white farmers and apparent unwillingness to cooperate with the US and UK. Unlike the former British Empire, the US is not “openly” dominant and does not pursue foreign

policies like colonialism as the old British Empire did. However, there is sufficient proof that the US is an imperialistic nation dominating economic, political and military activities of the world.

By dominating those major aspects it always gives a country leverage of influencing and deciding on many issues and this is what the US is practically doing. Its approach is a smart one that can only be described as neo colonialism. Exploitation of the world's resources; oil, forests, minerals is dominated by Americans to sustain its economic and security concerns. Nations which are hesitant to their policies and interests and who have abundant raw materials often end up being framed for atrocities and slapped with sanctions hurting the citizens of those countries. Its either you are with them or against them.

Additionally Americans have actively involved in political processes of many nations of the world like Iraq Afghanistan, Zimbabwe, Honduras and Kenya. The aid programs spearheaded by the state department are a form of imperialistic enslavement that gets nations hooked to American help and rarely get weaned. That almost ensures complete dependence and loyalty from the nations in return they get financial and economic assistance tied with interests. Closely related to the American imperial activities, are the covert operations that characterize American espionage programs.

Being a democratic nation as it boasts itself, the US is expected to be exemplary to rest of the world in terms of human rights upholding and the constitutional rule of law. Covert operations like the secret detention facilities that have been run and maintained by the CIA do little to project the US as the democratic nation it claims to be. Domestic activities and

policies of the country may be done democratically. But, when such unconstitutional and undemocratic activities are carried out, and especially in a covert manner, the US loses credibility and the moral authority that its leaders have always touted it to have.

It cannot be democratic nation so long as such activities are associated with it. Conclusion Every nation's foreign policy is linked to its interests. Therefore it's hard to condemn Americans on the foreign policy decisions their leaders make. However, that is not to say that in safeguarding national interests, other people's rights should be trampled upon. It's possible for the US to successfully carry out its foreign policy decisions with minimal interference to the rest of the world.