

Foreign aid and us politics



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To Be Or Not To Be Involved

In the year 1796, President George Washington gave his speech, the Farewell Address, directing to all fellow American citizens before he resigned from his presidential office concerning the young nation's future. He warned the Americans to avoid political parties for it may tear the country apart, and to avoid creating permanent alliances and foreign affairs, but rather favor isolationism and temporarily alliances in cases of emergencies. It wasn't until during the presidency of Woodrow Wilson, World War I occurred that America began to shift away from the ideology of neutrality. Since then until today, the United States rose to become the world's superpower and serves as the world's "police" after the aftermath of World War II and the Cold War, ending the concept of isolationism. With many speculations regarding foreign issues, threats, attacks, helping hands that are not needed and the increase of the deficit spending, many Americans began to wonder whether or not being involved in other countries' businesses would do more harm than good to the nation.

After the World Wars, many Americans believe that the country should cut all ties from any foreign affairs, including aids. A number of people believe that the government is spending too much money on foreign affairs, not realizing that the money being "wasted" is used to help many undeveloped countries around the world. In 1987, President Ronald Reagan stated in his speech, 'Remarks at a White House Briefing for the Citizens Network for Foreign Affairs,' that America is actually spending less than what they supposed to on foreign policies, "Give away too much money without return? The truth is that now, and historically, we've spent very little on foreign affairs in terms

of the overall budget of our government. In the late forties and early fifties, during the time of the Marshall plan, we spent 11 cents of every Federal dollar on foreign affairs. That figure had dropped to 4 cents on the dollar by 20 years ago and has continued to fall until, in recent years, we've been spending less than 2 cents of each dollar to support our national's foreign policy." [1] However, over the years America has changed; America continued to develop and strengthen their economy and defenses as well as helping other unfortunate countries who are in need to the point that America is in a deficit with the national debt of about 17 trillion dollars compared to Reagan's era which was only 1-2 trillion U. S dollars. President Bill Clinton made effort of lowering the national debt during his presidency, which he did briefly by -2. 0%, and the United States was in a surplus for just that moment until George W. Bush came into power in 2001. [2] By having their complete focus on foreign affairs, the U. S has neglected the problems arising among their own people.

As of today, thousands of Americans are unemployed and are being forced to continue to live in poverty. Many Americans argued that the billions of dollars the government is sending to foreign countries should be used for creating jobs and prevent poverty from spending throughout the country. Not only are thousands of Americans are living in poverty but also millions of foreigners around the world. Ironically, those billions of dollars the United States government sending is going to the Middle East, the most Anti-Americanized region in the world. [3] Americans questions why does the government even bother helping a country if they don't want any interference from outsiders regarding their own domestic issues. Although

America is trying their best to help as much as they can, half of those billions of dollars are going straight to the rich people's pockets rather than the poor and receive nothing in return as a result.

Foreign aid is supposed to help the lives of poor people who never had the chance to live a better life. For over 40-50 years, there are still children around the world roaming around on the streets to find food and help their parents' labor; many of those children if not all are illiterate. For 40-50 years of receiving foreign aid, these people's lives aren't improving much at all. As William Easterly pointed out, "The West spent \$2.3 trillion and Amarech is still carrying firewood. It's a tragedy that so much well-meaning compassion did not bring these results for needy people." [4] And did the people even receive the full amount of \$2.3 trillion of foreign aid? If the people in foreign countries truthfully received only about less than one-fourth of the original amount, what happened to the rest of the trillions of dollars? William Easterly cited that the money gets lost along the way to the World Bank, other agencies, rich people and corrupted politician leaders before the money finally arrives to the lower class citizens. And because the auxiliary countries usually don't pay attention, they just stop at that, not realizing that the money they have sent to a country like Ethiopia in Africa has come extremely short. "So with a long chain of officials in charge of the money with no one looking over their shoulder to see how they're spending it, there's plenty of ways that it leaks." [5] Unfortunately, the people who are more benefited with this amount of money are the rich.

Isolationist and former U. S Congressman, Ron Paul expresses his foreign policy by stating that "the country needs to 'downsize' its foreign policy."

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Despite being a conservative politician, Ron Paul opposes any type of foreign affairs and urges America to cut off foreign aid completely. He disapproves President Barack Obama continuously getting the nation too involved with the affairs which have already led to many misconceptions between the foreign countries and the United States. “What I really want is [President Barack Obama] to downsize the foreign policy, because if you stay involved in 140 countries . . . stirring up trouble, and you downsize the military, you run into a problem. So, it’s our intervention that needs downsizing.”[6] Paul also states that the countries should solve their own domestic policy issues without the United States constant interfering.

Even if there’s no intervention among countries, foreign aid creates dependency of countries one another, especially upon the U. S. When President Obama denied Ukraine’s need for military aid in the early 2014, he received many critics of why he didn’t help aid, and why did he not send in troops into Ukraine. His response was “ Why is it that everybody is so eager to use military force after we’ve just gone through a decade of war at enormous costs to our troops and to our budget? And what is it exactly that these critics think would have been accomplished? Do people actually think that somehow we sending some additional arms into Ukraine could potentially deter the Russian army? Or are we more likely to deter them by applying the sort of international pressure, diplomatic pressure and economic pressure that we’re applying?”[7]Obama had used the same tactic when issuing about Syria up until now. During the war in Libya, the Obama Administration intervention was poorly devised; the overall purpose of heading into Libya remained unclear. To add on more of the uncertainty of

Libya's affairs, Congress considered Obama's action a violation against the War Powers of Resolution of 1973.[8] Speaker of the House John Boehner informed the president that the Obama Administration must withdraw.[9]

Currently, the United States is involved with Syria's Civil War since 2011 with Syria's president Bashar al-Assad has warned against any foreign intervention that will be seen as an act of aggression to the entire country.

After the deaths of five 'Westerners' in Syria by attempting to give aid to the civilians, especially children, U. S President Barack Obama continues to send in more troops into the foreign country, not only to stop ISIS but also overthrow the Syrian President. [10][11]

However, the idea of foreign aid is not corrupt as some people may have interpret, but rather how much does the countries take role in foreign affairs.

When a country does not seek aid but to resolve their domestic issues instead on their own, a foreign country such as America should not have the right to interfere. There is no use of one country getting involved in a foreign issue that has nothing to do with them. However, if they continue to get involved without consent, then the foreign country may have become new enemies to the problematic country that is facing its own civil war as long as the issue may impact the entire world. In 1796, U. S President George Washington knew the dangers of being involved in foreign affairs, and although President Ronald Reagan stated that " We are the leader of the free world. And that is not a role we asked for; it's a role that was thrust upon us by history and by the hopes of those who aspire to freedom throughout the world." [1], so long as America continues to engage deeply with foreign affairs that are deemed " threatening to the entire world of democracy",

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America will continue making enemies and their economy will fall due to the large social gaps between the rich and the poor and the troubles the country is facing itself. Despite trying to not get involved with future affairs, many countries are already depending on the United States to resolve their problems such as the Ukraine Crisis. The best solution for America regarding foreign aid is less interference unless the situation is necessary.

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