

# Management essays - idealism and realism



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## **Idealism and Realism**

### **Conflict between idealism and realism in United States Foreign policy since 1970**

#### **Idealism**

Idealism emphasizes on the fact that the things in the world should exist in their ideal form rather than how they currently exist. It also particularly emphasizes on the commonly accepted values. Idealism deals with such a mentality, that believes in establishing things which are ideal for it. This philosophy argues that only those things, which are correct according to one's knowledge and awareness, should exist and also be practiced (Goldsmith & Krasner 2003).

Idealism in politics and foreign policy undoubtedly can have both positive and negative impacts. As idealism deals with normative ideas, it provides a ray of hope for making improvements in the progress of not only the single nation but the whole world. The primary requisite to make idealism a success is that the decision makers should be attentive enough to distribute the power, the consequences of their policies and national interests (Zinn, 1991).

#### **Realism**

The term Realism deals with the truthful treatment of the things. Its most crucial focus was the idea that any means would justify the worthy end. It emphasizes on the realistic and natural representation of the ideas of people, features of places, and/or many other things in a work of art. Particularly, it deals with the ordinary situations and ordinary solutions to the situations, not taking into consideration the ideals and the ethics. This is just opposite to the philosophy of idealism. It does not consider any of the

normative ideas; it rather believes in the situation, which is ahead at that point of time. It believes in attaining the self-motivated goals even after the misuse of other's economy and power (Zinn, 1991).

In politics and the foreign policy of the country, realism is not regarded as the best practice. It principally focuses on economic and military power rather than the ethics and ideal practices. The realism includes influencing some political and other economic events of the other economies in such a way that it promotes one's own power and influence. Particularly, in case of America, realism is concerned with stopping the countries to join the regime of communist and expanding the influence of democracy all over the world (Tehrani, 1997).

### **A study of the United States involvement in Chile**

Since the commencement of the cold war between the Soviet Union and the America, both the powers were trying to influence many nations of the world for implementing and supporting the ideology of their own. This was done not only for expanding their ideology but also to gain some economic and military benefits out of them and to become the super power of the world. The direct or indirect involvement of the United States in the political and other affairs of the county of Chile was because of the above mentioned reason. The United States of America was trying to discourage communism in the country and was trying to establish the democracy out there. Find out how our expert essay writers can help you with your work...

America, with the help of CIA (Central Intelligence Agency), had launched a campaign against the communist leader of Chile. This resulted into the

defeat of Salvador Allende, but in the elections of 1970, he once again gained power. Thus, it resulted into the imposition of many restrictions on foreign aids being provided to Chile. Not only this, America also actively came ahead and tried to put an end to the presidency of Allende, even though the communist leader was democratically elected.

In this case, the United States of America, under the name of spreading idealism was involved in practicing realism. He removed the ruler of the country not on the basis of their authority, or due to the importance of their own positions, but completely on the basis of their compliance with the US ideology. Though it argued that all its actions are in support of spreading the democracy, which is the best form of political system in the world, but it was achieved with the help of wrong means and tactics. This achievement of the right, which ends with the help of wrong means, is called realism and not the idealism. The US in his war against communism had resorted to undertake terrorism (Goldsmith & Krasner 2003).

### **Geopolitical reasons**

The geopolitical reasons, which posed the conflict and made the US to follow the realism in name of idealism, can be discussed in the following lines. The first one could be the presence of the Chile in the South American continent and above it, the presence of a political system which supported communist ideology. Chile was the only country in this continent, which was daring to follow the political system that his neighbor was not supporting. Therefore, America, in order to establish the ideology of democracy in the county of Chile, undertook many unauthorized and wrong means. The other reason was the aim of the United States of America to become the super power of

the region. As a super power, the country wanted to control not only the economic activities of the other countries but also wanted to have close influence into the political system of those countries.

### **Globalization**

Globalization is a phenomenon of the increasing integration of various societies and economies all around the world. With the initiation of the new era of development and industrialization after the World War II, United States of America wanted to control most of the resources in the world. It also aimed at attaining fast economic and technological development. All of these could be possible only if most of the countries, which it wanted to, invade, followed and accepted the American philosophy. Therefore, the USA wanted that every country in the world should follow the policies similar to them. But when it was noticed that these aims were not coming into function, it resorted to the realism practices behind the curtain of Idealism. It forced many countries to act according to the American wishes.

### **Isolation vs. involvement**

The policies of isolation and involvement of the United States of America also posed conflicts between its idealism and realism functioning. The policy of isolation followed by many countries forced the USA to adopt realism.

Because of the isolation policy followed by many countries like India, Chile, etc., America undertook such means to enter their economy, which were against its philosophy of idealism. It just resorted to the see its main objective of development and growth, no matter how they are being achieved. Political, social, financial and even economic factors of these counties were influenced by the USA to make them follow its ideology.

Following the policy of isolation, the countries wanted to remain neutral in their stand. They did not want to stand between the war of two big super powers, i. e. The USA and the Soviet Union. So, the isolation policies of the nations also compelled the USA to divert to the realism policy (Falkner 2007).

### **Unilateralism vs. coalitions**

With the growth of globalization, liberalization and industrialization, every country was engaged in making coalitions with some or the other associations. These associations with their mutual understanding and support helped in the growth and development of their partner. This resulted into their quick development. The United States of America, with the aim of becoming the super power, did not like this development of communist countries. Therefore, on the name spreading idealism, it tried to forcefully make the coalitions with those countries, which could help it in its aim. Even those countries were included in the coalitions, which wanted to remain aloof from the coalitions. The countries that refused to do so either faced sanctions or were regarded as the partners of the opposite party.

### **Conclusion**

Thus, from the above discussion, it is clear that though the United States of America had the noble aim of spreading the world's most powerful and best political system in every country, the approach adopted by it was wrong (Falkner 2007). It achieved the right ends by wrong means. It made the countries free from the authoritarian rule of communist, but by taking the help of terrorists. Instead of adopting the whole and sole principles of idealism, it resorted to the principles of realism. Behind the curtains of Idealism, it was practicing Realism. By its practices, many a times, it

overruled the considerations of democracy and good governance. Therefore, we can say that the United States of America has the potential and ability to bring positive changes in the world, but the only thing it lacks is the right approach. It should pay more attention on the ideals and ethics while practicing idealism in true sense

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