

What Is Happening to America's 'Superpower' Status?

As I watch the Afghanistan debacle unfold and the migrant invasion continue along the southern border, I begin to feel the collapse of another superpower has begun. These two phenomena represent dramatic changes within the United States as well as in its external prestige and international influence.

Like the French historian Emmanuel Todd, I predict that in the not-too-distant future the U.S. will, or at least can, lose its global influence and even become a problem for the rest of the world.

In his 2001 book titled *After the Empire: The Breakdown of the American Order*, Todd claims that numerous indices he has reviewed suggest that the United States has exceeded its time as a superpower; he views numerous foreign policy moves as efforts to mask U.S. redundancy. He predicts the ultimate collapse of the U.S. as a global force.

History suggests that a superpower maintains its status for 200-plus years and then begins to relinquish its power to another emerging nation state. The original Persian empire established under Cyrus the Great functioned as an international force for approximately 200 years but suffered defeat and lost its status when Alexander the Great, king of Macedonia, defeated the Persians and King Darius III died in 330 B.C.

France became a worldwide colonial empire in the 16th century but lost its power in the 18th century when the monarchy and the institutions were destroyed in the French Revolution.

The British Empire operated as one of the most extensive empires in history throughout the late 18th and 19th centuries and enjoyed some of its greatest achievements in the first half of the 20th century. It had direct rule over large sections of the world. World Wars I and II, however, weakened Britain and witnessed increasingly independent views among sections of the empire. The increased independence brought about a decline in the empire after the Second World War.

The U.S. emerged as a developing superpower with the Treaty of Paris in 1898. That treaty ceded several Spanish possessions to the U.S. For years the U.S. functioned as a global fixer, but in recent years the country has been in retreat. Partisanship has flourished; budget deficits have persisted. National debt has increased substantially, and a form of social and political tribalism is developing.

Within the past year both internal and external developments have further eroded the U.S. influence. The country remains a dominant power in world affairs but no longer serves as a global leader.

President Biden has brought about a presidential revolution that much like the French Revolution is destroying the presidency and established institutions and is upending long-accepted presidential norms.

In a 2018 article published in *Harvard Law Review* and titled "Presidential Norms and Article II," Harvard Assistant Law School Professor Daphna Renan pointed out that norms demand that a U.S. president exercise fact-informed judgment when making decisions regarding domestic and foreign policy issues. Unwritten features of Article II of the Constitution aids in determining when a president is behaving abnormally.

The recent behavior of President Joe Biden has proved to be far from normal, and his judgment regarding most dimensions of the Afghanistan catastrophe and the migrant onslaught at the

southern border has failed to meet the norms of accepted governance. His behavior seems inadvertently to promote social unrest and a tendency toward ally rejection or questioning of the United States and its leadership.

At a 2020 summit in Singapore, Ian Bremmer, an American political scientist and author who focuses on global risk, declared in a speech that he envisioned a world without leadership in the near future. Earlier this year, the Pew Research Center conducted an international survey regarding the level of trust in U.S. democracy, and only 17% of the respondents felt U.S. democracy served as a desirable model. Bremmer's declaration and the Pew survey clearly pointed to a decline in trust in America and its global prestige and leadership.

America's power and influence are in a crisis. The Biden administration continues to deepen the crisis with its handling of the surge in migration at the southern border and the deplorable retreat from Afghanistan. President Biden's behavior and Vice President Kamala Harris' apparent refusal to engage in the administration's challenges do not suggest or demonstrate effective leadership.

The United States is no longer the sole superpower. In fact, it may not even be considered a superpower any longer but merely a former leader of nations. We clearly see the loss of status in the mishandling of both the southern border and the Afghanistan crisis.

The migrant surge has endangered all of America and has introduced multiple problems that will plague us for years to come. The mismanagement of the departure from Afghanistan has shown unbelievably poor judgment and a lack of understanding of international affairs and relations.

The Biden insurgency has hastened the elimination of the U.S. as the world's sole superpower and has widened the opening for

entities like China to increase their global influence. {eoa}

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