

Why America? It's their problem, not ours

America has served as a world leader for the past few decades because it is the last remaining superpower in the world. America has a 13 trillion dollar economy that is or does affect every form of business in the world. Our foreign policy reflects our founding fathers ideas, that the government needs to protect the people from threats, but still let them have their freedoms. This is quite the daunting task because it is difficult to protect somebody who has the freedom to leave their own country and travel to an unstable country. The role of the US in foreign affairs is a tight rope act. We cannot be too aggressive, but still be offensive in order to protect our citizens.

During the early 1980's the US was in a race with the USSR for the title of World Superpower. The US won. The USSR declined in military and economic power in the mid to late 1980's. Some people felt that America's strength was an illusion due to its withdrawal from Vietnam, Beirut, and Mogadishu, but when militant Islamists hit the world trade centers on 9/11/01, America showed its true strength as it toppled the Taliban and Saddam Hussein. A powerful country like the US must serve as the global police in today's foreign affairs.

The US economy is the largest in the world, with a gross domestic production of 14.6 trillion dollars in 2008. Having the largest economy also gives you the most economic control. The US trades, buys or sells with every country in the world during its fiscal year. This is driven by the consumer. In 2008, 72% of the economic activity was stimulated by the consumer. Having such economic power gives our country control, but also liability. Sometimes we may discontinue trade with a certain country or product and that will, in turn, create a weak economic state in that area. Not all of the instability is external. The US also has some issues to deal with, such as external debt. As of September 2008, the gross external debt was over 13.6 trillion dollars. All of these factors connect the US to the world and foreign issues.

The US Foreign policy is highly influential in the world, as it is the last remaining superpower. The Foreign Policy Agenda of the US Department of State officially stated that the foreign policy is "to create a more secure, democratic, and prosperous world for the benefit of the American people and the international community." This means that if there is a threat made toward the citizens of the US that our government must protect us.

There is a necessity in the world for a leader, a country to "police" the rest of the world. America has stepped up to the plate and taken on this task, while some people feel that we are too aggressive, there are others that want us to take more drastic steps to eradicate terrorism. Regardless, our country has a place in foreign affairs.