

**The Fate of the American Empire Circa 2075**

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## **Abstract**

The fall of an empire has continuously inspired much intrigue, so it's no surprise that many speculate and debate about the fall of the current empire: the American. The official fall of an empire is typically difficult to pinpoint, as many factors contribute to its ruin, therefore it's even harder to determine if the current empire is on the road to devastation. There are many notable perspectives to look through when analyzing this issue, including the neo-imperialist perspective, the American exceptionalist, and the declinist. All make strong cases for their vision of the American future, however, with the inclusion of the climate change issue, the declinist school of thought may possess a stronger argument. The current problems caused by climate change and the evidence that nearly guarantees that the situation will only worsen in the coming years exhibit the high likelihood of the declinist warnings becoming a painful reality by 2075.

### **The Fate of the American Empire Circa 2075**

Humanity has a tendency to test the limits of mortality, always handing art, poetry, traditions, and empires to the next generation with the expectation and hope that their creators will not be forgotten. Despite this enduring sentiment, one cannot deny that the nature of these creations, especially one as volatile as an empire, reflects the nature of its creators and caretakers, who are decidedly human. The lethal conviction of one's inviolability nearly always leads to devastating ruin, therefore one must always look upon an empire with the expectation that it will eventually fall. The sinister companion of certainty and arrogance, who relishes in the brutalization of the expected reality, will shadow all who spout immortality. The American empire is no exception to this. However, the question of *when* the empire will fall is difficult to answer without the assistance of hindsight. Even then, there are clues one can utilize to create predictions. Through the examination of the neo imperialist, American exceptionalist, and declinist school of thought, one can prevent the tragic trap of stagnation and explore the various paths of the future. Will American dominance mark a new epoch in consciousness that remains after its physical fall, or will history render it as just another empire? Their insight with the addition of Carol Ann Drogus and Stephen Orvis (*Introducing Comparative Politics*), as well as considering the impact of climate change, one can explore a myriad of options. But based on the evidence found, it is most likely that by 2075, the American empire will fall. Had the element of climate change not come into play, the empire could have lasted centuries more. There is no guarantee that the American empire will undoubtedly fall into ruin in 50 years, however, the wreckage that the Earth, and by extension its societies will undergo will likely damn the American empire to an early end.

### **Carol Ann Drogus and Stephen Orvis**

In their textbook, *Introducing Comparative Politics*, personal insight was absent, and unbiased information was the priority. Considering the purpose of the textbook, which is to educate, this may be preferable as personal beliefs can influence the objectivity of certain information. They presented knowledge from a variety of notable political figures and philosophers without letting personal bias interfere. Outside of the textbook, Carol Ann Drogus specializes in Latin American politics while Stephen Drogus has significant research in African studies. One noteworthy aspect of the textbook, though, was that it was catered to American students. Besides nearly all chapters studying or at least mentioning the U.S., there were many direct acknowledgements of American students. For example, one can see this on page 137 in the subsection studying Parliamentarism, specifically the Westminster model, “The prime minister also appoints the other ministers (what Americans call “secretaries”) to the cabinet” (Orvis & Drogus, 2008, p. 137). This implies that this textbook was written with the American audience in mind, so when considering their primary readers, they may have taken lengths to conceal any particularly negative feelings toward the American empire. Of course this is all speculation. However, when looking at certain sections there seems to be suggestions of a potential declinist view. On page 49, when discussing strong, weak, and failed states:

Francis Fukuyama (2014), for instance, argued that the U.S. state has weakened in the last several decades due mainly to what he calls "gift exchange" between legislators, lobbyists, and campaign donors that weakens the state's ability to make independent decisions based on some sense of the public interest. (p. 49)

A single mention of the American state weakening is worth little, however, there was also a statement mentioning how “Many analysts claim the United States has faced this problem

regularly in recent years” (p. 146), the problem being effective policymaking. This statement is not completely antagonistic toward the American government, as they acknowledged that the U.S. possesses a strong system of accountability which may lead to the disruption of policymaking. However, there was also a debate regarding the compatibility of presidentialism and democracy where “...most scholarship has found that presidentialism is likely to be more crisis-prone and threatening to the survival of a new democracy than is parliamentarism (Samuels 2007)” (p. 147). To be fair, this was a debated issue with critics on either side and no apparent winner. All of the mentioned pieces of evidence belong to other’s perspective and fact, without any outright critique or personal commentary. There is no discernible confirmation of a declinist view, American exceptionalist view, or neo-imperialist view. Through these facts, however, one could potentially come to the conclusion that the U.S. is a weakening state with a system that is ineffective long-term.

### **Neo Imperialism**

Neo imperialism, as described by James Petras, is essentially domination over other countries through the means of soft power (economically, culturally, politically), rather than the traditional hard power that past imperialistic nations utilized to exert their power over others (Petras, 2019). Neo, or “new imperialism” is simply an enhanced, modern version of the traditional imperialism that defined the brutal rule of the mighty nations of the past. This new type of domination is what the United States is predicted to shift toward by those who follow the neo imperialist school of thought; the American empire will not stay the same nor will it fall, instead its methods of domination will simply change. The American empire will still remain in 2075, but its structure and presence will be distinctly different from its current military-heavy self.

James Petras, a prominent figure leading the neo imperialist argument, argues that this change is inevitable seeing as traditional imperialism is unsustainable. He insists in an article that “the empire is no longer based on robust overseas growth but rather the empire today is a costly and declining proposition” (Petras, 2018), which is partially due to costly wars and military expeditions. Global military dominance was the key goal of the United States during its rise, and the fall of the USSR in the 1990’s both solidified that dominance and enhanced its hunger.

To sustain and further its global military dominance, Washington declared a world-wide ‘war on terrorism’ which accentuated the military dimensions of ‘unipolarity’. The US empire was redefined through its military capacity to overthrow independent regimes, to carry on multiple wars, and to simultaneously fund overseas economic conquests while maintaining dynamic domestic growth (Petras, 2018)

Being consumed by this obsession for military dominance led to the United States making several costly decisions and declaring multiple wars (for example, the “war on terror” in the Middle East) which cost the government billions of dollars. To finance this, the domestic economy was financialized, which meant “intensifying the exploitation of the domestic labor market, reallocating the federal budget and reducing taxes for economic elite. The US redefined empire building as exploiting the domestic economy to militarize the empire” (Petras, 2018). Not only did militarization largely fail, but abusing the domestic economy led to financial crashes and massive debt, clearly exhibiting that the colonial process would fail in the U.S.’s case. Emphasis on the military in combination with the current economic system (capitalism) is the root of the rot eating away at the American empire’s glory and life.

Although Petras does not blame the system of capitalism itself for the gradual economic depression plaguing the U.S., he does accuse the current “corrupted” version of capitalism for

bringing about these economic problems. In an analysis of the world economy and its depression, Petras found that this corruption is due to the neoliberal policies which have “opened new areas for investment of surplus profits: public enterprises, land, resources and banks were privatized.” Neoliberalism, based on liberalism, pushes limited government and privatization. Unfortunately, this has led to the detriment of many workers, both American and international, as regulations were weakened, wages froze, and social benefits were cut for the sake of profit. This worsened as corporations began finding cheaper labor to overexploit in countries in Asia, Africa, and/ or Latin America. The massive profit earned contributed to “the paper economy” which collapsed and “exposed the overdeveloped financial system and forced its demise” (Petras, 2009). In short, the current economy is in crisis, and this crisis is fueling the suffering of many citizens as unemployment rises and living standards plummet.

The consequences that resulted in these failures, such as the deterioration of domestic systems (ex; healthcare, education), led to many claiming that twilight was approaching for the American empire, but this may not be true, and although the old ways of American hegemony were rendered obsolete, “...what appear as losses created conditions which allowed for a reconcentration of America’s power and a relative stabilization of its influence over and against its challengers”(Petras & Rhodes, 2016). This claim establishes that there is undeniable decline, yet this decline may propel a new series of policies forward, ones that enhance soft power. In a combined examination, both Rhodes and Petras established that there are foundations of power one must observe. The first being economic, “While US imperial state power maintains its network, it is possible for American business to oust competitors, receive lucrative contracts, reverse trade patterns, collect debts, obtain loans” (Petras & Rhodes, 2016), meaning that there is still vast potential that the U.S. may take advantage of in order to bolster its financial gain and

economic domination. Second, political and social relations. This shift toward social/ political influence has unfortunate implications for the domestic side, since internal colonialism will likely result in a worsened exploitation of the core state (seen in many different empires, such as the Roman and the Gupta empire), in which the cultural and legal strangulation of its citizens will be exacerbated.

Lacking any form of organized class challenge to capitalist hegemony, the American capitalist class has an unlimited capacity to recuperate from economic crises without paying the political and social costs that all its competitors must confront...US capitalism is in an excellent position to 'modernize' industries, increase productivity and lower the cost of goods by maintaining high levels of unemployment and lowering the social costs of production, through fiscal squeezes on the federal, state and local governments. (Petras & Rhodes, 2016)

Signs of this type of mental and physical borderline slavery have intensified in the past couple of years and are representative of the new imperialism; one that manipulates other countries and bends them to their will through economic and cultural means. This cultivation of domestic culture brimming with exploitation is unfortunately becoming more and more prevalent throughout the globe.

On the flip side, when spectating the American public, one may argue that far too many are dissatisfied with the current situation, and its worsening may spark genuine protest and potential rebellion. Furthermore, in some polls, international opinion of the United States has plummeted, especially with its involvement in the war between Israel and Hamas/ Gaza (Coi & Mackenzie, 2024), which has potential to impact its foreign and economic ties. But when considering the massive power, the U.S. government still possesses, as well as the significantly

more powerful corporations backing it, these factors mean very little. One factor that may be of concern to the neo imperialist school of thought, however, is if there is a large enough group of people able to successfully implement these new policies. Neo imperialism implies transformation, and to induce transformation, action must be taken by enough individuals and groups. The deciding factor is if these actions will triumph.

Considering the volatility of humanity, a neo imperialistic world could most certainly come to fruition. Or it could not. Either way, if the factor of climate change had not come into play, the future would have been less limited. Perhaps the neo imperialist path may even succeed for the first few decades, but when looking at the implication of economic and profit driven policies, the environmental backlash would only point toward the fate of decline.

### **American Exceptionalism**

American exceptionalism insists upon the immortality of the American Empire. Although the definitions of immortality differ between various figures, the main point of American exceptionalism is that the American empire, for better or for worse, will continue in some form. Some notable individuals belonging to this ideology include Dinesh D'Souza and Joseph Nye, who both trust that the American empire will sustain itself and live on for significantly longer than those belonging to the neo imperialist or declinist school of thought have argued. D'Souza declares that the U.S. empire holds a sort of superiority, and its values will make certain that its empire shall be eternal (D'Souza, 2007). Nye's position, on the other hand, adopts a more pragmatic view toward the empire's predicted longevity, citing its use of "smart power" and its ability to adapt as some of his reasoning (Harvard Kennedy School, 2025). Despite slight differences, both establish a set of points that reveal the American empire being in a downcycle rather than an absolute decline, and that by 2075, its dominance will still be felt globally.

Dinesh D'Souza is a strong advocate for American exceptionalism, believing fiercely and fundamentally in its superiority. The foundation of his arguments lies in the spirit and ideals of the American system; the emphasis on freedom and a free society cultivates a new type of human that is, in his view, morally superior compared to those of other societies. This is mainly due to Americans possessing the choice to be good. America boasts a free society, and with freedom comes choice; despite numerous options, many choose to be good, which in D'Souza's perspective renders Americans automatically better than those who are supposedly forced to be good. In an essay D'Souza compares American society to Islamic society and argues that "[t]he millions of Americans who live decent, praiseworthy lives deserve our highest admiration because they have opted for the good when the good is not the only available option... Their virtue has special luster because it is freely chosen." In contrast, he claims that "...the externally directed life that Islamic fundamentalists seek undermines the possibility of virtue... because coerced virtues are not virtues at all" (D'Souza, 2007). In this view, D'Souza argues that the immortality of the American empire derives its power primarily from its ideological supremacy. It seems that he believes that the U.S. empire is destined to succeed because it represents an evolution of humanity, not just a skillful cultivation of control. He ends this essay by proclaiming

...America is a new kind of society that produces a new kind of human being. That human being-confident, self-reliant, tolerant, generous, future oriented-is a vast improvement over the wretched, servile, fatalistic, and intolerant human being that traditional societies have always produced... America is the greatest, freest, and most decent society in existence... History will view America as a great gift to the world, a gift that Americans today must preserve and cherish. (D'Souza, 2007)

Although D'Souza provides other reasoning for why the American empire will last, his elementary belief system, the bedrock fueling countless arguments in defense of the American empire is important to analyze, as his vision of the empire feels borderline religious; it arguably possesses a fanatic confidence in fate and the American destiny of humanity. Furthermore, it seems that D'Souza oversimplifies and generalizes many societies without bothering to deeply understand the individuals that those societies are composed of. This perspective offers many questions: What is the definition of good in D'Souza's perspective? What about other individual's definitions of good? Is he ignoring the ugly realities of colonialism that the Americans have partaken in? And does a change in belief system necessitate "evolution"?

Conversely, Joseph Nye takes a less ideological standpoint, as mentioned previously. Nye instead utilizes a more analytical perspective and explains America's current standpoint, the various reasons for the perception of decline, and its potential to remain the strongest power. In his book, *Bound to Lead* (1990), he establishes that the American power is waning, especially when compared to the late twentieth century, but through economic data he has found that the decline is not a notable sign of an *absolute, continuous* decline. Rather, the methods of measuring power and the rapid change toward international interdependence have prompted a natural erosion and some confusion regarding the American position. He even argues that this decline may benefit the U.S. in the long run as it would inspire a break in complacency and shed light over the myriads of growing domestic issues. He also argues against Paul Kennedy's concept of imperial overstretch, which is when a nation overexerts its strength while pursuing growing military power resulting in another nation overtaking its position, by citing how "In the United States today, just about 27 percent of the federal budget is spent on defense (including veterans' benefits). And unlike the historical examples, America's overseas commitments do not

involve the occupation and control of conquered territories.” For reference, France spent 75% while Russia spent 85% toward the end of their empire (Nye, 1990), displaying how historical data confirms that the American empire is nowhere near its metaphorical deathbed. Additionally, the U.S. has the advantage of “smart power,” which in Nye’s terms are the perfect combination of hard and soft power, which reinforce each other to construct a wonderfully indomitable weapon. Through this information, one can gather that the U.S. can remain a secure empire even well into the twenty-second century. Despite this positive sentiment, Nye issues a warning that the empire has an equal capacity to fall; the fear of decline may blind the government, which could influence them to turn

...toward nationalistic and protectionist policies that would constrain our ability to cope with issues created by growing international interdependence. Thus, there is no virtue in either overstatement or understatement of American strength. The former leads to failure to adapt, the latter to "cures" that do more harm than the disease. (Nye, 1990)

One can determine that the fate of the empire could go either way. Despite America’s capabilities, the changing world can either present itself as a steppingstone to further establish dominance or a threat that could easily collapse the towering empire. In a recent interview, Nye reveals that the current president, Donald Trump, makes no use of soft power, “What I don’t see in President Trump, particularly in the second vintage, is any sensitivity to the usefulness of combining soft and hard powers” (Harvard Kennedy School, 2025), which is a considerable blow to the necessary tool of smart power essential to the empire’s life and continuance.

Furthermore, the protectionist policies (tariffs, etc) and nationalistic tendencies (MAGA) point toward potential downfall. However, even if the physical empire of the U.S. were to fall, there is another perspective of immortality to consider.

One American Exceptionalist proclaims that the pinnacle of ideological evolution has been reached in the form of Western liberal democracy. That is not to say that the American empire will not fall or that other wars will not be fought. Simply, what is accepted "...as the final form of human government" (Fukuyama, 1992) has been found, therefore the American Empire represents the end of history. Years from now the physicality of the American empire may be long lost, yet Fukuyama claims that its legacy and its imprint on the collective consciousness of humanity will permanently live on. This is a critical view to examine when looking at American Exceptionalism as it highlights the other aspect of immortality. Other than the economic crash of 2008-2009, which does weaken the argument of the liberal/ capitalist feature, Fukuyama has a point in that globalization is making it so that the vast majority of the societies that occupy Earth are striving for a system similar to the U.S. The actualization of D'Souza and Nye's views could have happened had they not failed to take into account the wrecking ball that is climate change, yet Fukuyama's claim may somewhat be glimpsed in the wrecked future. There will likely be those who escape the consequences of climate change through rockets or bunkers or havens, and those who do so will likely remember the American empire and may even replicate some of its core ideals. On the other hand, they may choose to condemn and blame the empire for what it brought and choose a new ideology. So, it is plausible that the emergence of a new history will surface from the remnants of the old in the next few decades.

### **Declinism**

Declinism is the school of thought committed to the idea that the American empire will undeniably fall. Two memorable figures spearheading this school are Paul Kennedy, author of *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* (1987), and Immanuel Wallerstein, author of *The Decline of the American Power* (2003). Kennedy primarily emphasized historical patterns and imperial

overstretch while Wallerstein used more economical evidence to prove his claim. Regardless of their difference in reasoning, both individuals are united under the belief that decline is an ineluctable force for empires; no great power is spared in that fate and America's is nearing her's.

Kennedy in *The Rise and the Fall of the Great Powers* mentions the concept of imperial overstretch, which is in short, nations overexerting their military to the point where their economic bases, their core, crumbled as consequence (Kennedy, 1987). He claims that in "[t]he desperate efforts to be strong on all fronts ran a serious risk of making the empire weak everywhere" (Kennedy, 1987, p. 218), which he used in the context of the Austrian Hungarian empire's fall. Many dead empires toward the end of their glory spent vast amounts on their military which starved the domestic sector. He reveals how the U.S. is repeating that pattern. Currently, the trillions in debt the government is in and the neglect of social services which has led to a visible starvation of the public can be used in favor of Kennedy's argument. But there are also others such as Henry Nau who published a critique against Kennedy's book arguing:

...his implicit theory ignored the two most dramatic developments of the twentieth century. One was the convergence of domestic identities around democratic ideals. The other was the technological revolution that both restrained the prospects of interstate war (the nuclear revolution) and accelerated interstate social and economic interactions (Nau, 2001, p. 586)

These developments, as Nau states, were not mentioned in Kennedy's analysis; democratic peace theory and the evolving world with its new technology have changed certain aspects of the world, and the future may diverge from the historical path as a result.

Wallerstein's perspective, on the other hand, highlights how the changing world and rising powers will inevitably remove America from its top position. America's position has already been weakened through events such as the Vietnam war where its failure led to the "the official U.S. ideological position--antifascist, anticommunist, anticolonialist-- seemed thin and unconvincing to a growing portion of the world's populations." America's soft power is waning as its reputation gradually worsens and its ideology appeals to less and less. America's power will weaken further as other countries succeed; Wallerstein specifically mentioned Japan's success in manufacturing a supercomputer in 2002 where "The Japanese machine is built to analyze climatic change, but U.S. machines are designed to simulate weapons...The dominant power concentrates (to its detriment) on the military; the candidate for successor concentrates on the economy" (Wallerstein, 2002). This exhibits how the fundamental structure of the U.S. and its fixation on the military will lead to others quickly overtaking its powerful position.

In response to Wallerstein's claims, one critic commented "[t]he claim that US power is declining flies in the face of conventional wisdom." He refutes many of the claims that other countries were a threat to the U.S.'s position (Japan and the former Soviet Union) and he questions why Wallerstein did not involve more perspective such as the feminist perspective and notes that "[t]ransnational and diasporic communities, direct action and localized knowledge all play only a small role in his analysis" (Sherman, 2004). Wallerstein's analysis of capitalism's evolution plays a crucial role in determining if the American empire is able to survive, even then, Sherman has a strong point in that the incorporation of other perspectives could reveal transformative details that Wallerstein could have missed.

There have been many critics of declinism and by association, Kennedy and Wallerstein, due to the fact that declinism has been active for decades and yet the American empire, to an

extent, is still prosperous. Furthermore, some of their predictions were proven wrong in recent years (Japan is, for example, not an economic threat), though that does not completely negate this theory. Without the climate change element, declinism is probable but would be less likely in the face of the many other theories that have sprouted from the variety of philosophies and schools of thoughts; the previously addressed neo imperialism and American exceptionalism, for example, have much potential. Adding to that, when evaluating the massive power that the U.S. currently holds, it would be exceedingly difficult to destroy its empire in 50 years. Doing so would require a cataclysmic event. This is where the component of climate change presents itself.

### **Climate Change**

Climate change, according to NASA, is “long-term change in the average weather patterns that have come to define Earth’s local, regional and global climates” (NASA, n.d.). These changes have been relatively minor thus far, rendering it an issue that many politicians, particularly American, sweep under the rug. Unfortunately, these small changes tend to accrue over time and will culminate into a massive problem which will negatively impact many societies and individuals on Earth. Although many countries in Asia and in the European Union have taken action against climate change, the policies and current state of the American corporations, which display a clear disregard for environmental sustainability, endangers both the planet and the future stability of American society. However, despite these warnings being reminiscent of doomsday conspiracy theorists, the Earth will very likely not end or morph into an apocalyptic wasteland by 2075 (probably). But there will be significant change that will undermine the foundations of many societies, especially the American empire. The extent of that effect on societies such as China or those in Europe is unclear, however they could be better off

seeing as there's a clear initiative to combat this crisis and policies are in place that are predicted to be effective long term. Even then, the consequences of other countries' lack of environmental consideration places everyone at risk.

Predictions for coming years differ in their severity, but current facts state that despite Earth possessing natural cycles of warming and cooling, the "10 top hottest years ever recorded have all been after 2000, with records being beaten year after year," and Earth has already undergone 1.3°C of warming. Furthermore, "Before the 18th century... our atmosphere typically contained about 280 parts per million of carbon dioxide... we're crossing 420 ppm" (350.org, 2024). This is due to the burning of fossil fuels which emit carbon dioxide into the atmosphere and is the biggest contributor to climate change. Adding onto that, according to

IPCC report on Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability, around 3.3 to 3.6 billion people live in contexts that are highly vulnerable to climate change. The report also says that 50-75% of the world population can be exposed to periods of "life-threatening climatic conditions" by 2100. (350.org, 2024)

The effect on the economy, according to the Environmental Health News Organization, will be disastrous with a predicted \$38 trillion annual loss in damages due to climate change by 2050. Income will also be affected with North American and European regions seeing an 11% decrease while Africa and South America will unfortunately be hit with a 20% decrease (350.org, 2024). By 2070, the Daily Climate Organization predicts that there will be a "50% drop in global GDP" due to interruptions in food production and social collapse. Ice sheet loss and changes in ocean circulation (The Daily Climate, 2025) as well as annual lethal heatwaves (Climate Change News, 2016) will render substantial portions of the planet uninhabitable. This will undoubtedly undermine global and economic stability. Worsening this crisis, new research presented by the

World Economic Forum reveals that the ocean will start emitting CFC-11, which are harmful ozone-depleting chlorofluorocarbons, into the atmosphere (World Economic Forum, 2021). The ocean has always served as a buffer against climate change, absorbing large amounts of harmful ozone-depleting fumes. With this change, global warming will exponentially worsen and will likely guarantee the decline of most societies on Earth, including American.

Alfred McCoy, a historian and professor, predicted that life circa 2050 will be unimaginably bad, bordering apocalyptic due to the consequences of nations being unable to limit the use of fossil fuels. McCoy predicted that a new world order may even emerge as a result of mass chaos and destruction. His evidence suggests that the temperature increase will be unevenly distributed, so a 1.5°C overall increase could imply a 4.5°C increase in the Arctic's high altitudes. This would lead to the melting of the permafrost in the Arctic, which

...holds enough potentially releasable carbon and methane to melt the poles and inundate densely populated coastal plains worldwide. In turn, such emissions would only raise Arctic temperatures further, melt more permafrost (and ice), and so on, year after year after year. (McCoy, 2021)

Besides causing a rise in sea levels, which he cited the National Academies of Sciences as projecting "a rise of as much as 20 inches by 2050 and 78 inches in 2100, with a 'catastrophic' loss of 690,000 square miles of land... displacing about 2.5 percent of the world's population" (McCoy, 2021), hurricanes and wildfires will ravage remaining land spared by the ocean. McCoy guaranteed that this type of environmental catastrophe will ruin the current international order and implied potential extinction for humanity.

The Stanford Existential Risks Initiative produces hypothetical scenarios concentrating on several issues; one of these issues is climate change. In their hypothetical scenario, which

takes place in the year 2075, they speculated that “30% of 1850’s biodiversity will be wiped out by 2040 and 50% by 2050, and has, since 2065, left the Earth without clean water and lacking in food” (Stanford Existential Risks Initiative, 2023, 0:27-0:39). The capitalist economic system which would take advantage of Africa, would forgo environmental sustainability standards and policies, which in turn cause an influx of gas emissions, increasing the global temperature. The mass migrations and collapse of industries as a result will wreck the global financial sector. A terrible famine brought on by a mass drought” will permanently reduce food output by 75%” (Stanford Existential Risks Initiative, 2023, 2:05-2:08) starting in 2055 leading to inflation, global depression, and then finally, financial collapse. Mass immigration from rising sea levels, agricultural issues, infighting, and an exodus from equatorial regions will destroy current political systems. This initiative concluded that “the endless power games and governance failures” (Stanford Existential Risks Initiative, 2023, 5:22-5:24) could ultimately condemn humanity to its final end.

The 2050 and 2075 predictions are the worst-case scenarios. But despite them being “worst-case” their fruition is alarmingly near when examining the current setting. A critical concern that all climate change investigations raised was the reaction of governments and political leaders. Their actions will determine if humanity meets an early end. Considering the arrogant tendencies of past U.S. leaders, emerging issues resulting from climate change (food shortages, environmental disasters, immigration, etc.) that the public expresses anger over will quickly be directed toward other countries. China and India have a high likelihood of becoming America’s scapegoat, worsening diplomatic relations and ignoring the main problem. New industries may pop up profiting from the sickness induced by climate change, treating its symptoms all while refusing to address the cause of it. The American system of electing leaders

will ensure that any President will be elected after being thoroughly vetted out by the rich controlling the system, worsening chances of finding a leader capable of checking corporations and deterring doom. This execrable setting will undoubtedly determine if America might utilize these circumstances to maintain hegemony or if it will make a series of ill-advised choices leading them to discard their title of empire.

### **Conclusion**

The fickleness of humanity demands that all options be open, so in truth, any one of the schools of thoughts, be it neo imperialism or American exceptionalism or perhaps another, could claim legitimacy and the title of America's future. All are plausible and would have had a fighting chance in predicting the next century's reality. However, based on the current trajectory of climate change and the principles of today's leaders, it seems that wide scale declinism will define 2075. At the very worst, if war and climate change were to amalgamate into a single world ending force, the rich may finally vacate Earth and grant the rest of humanity a moment of peace before they are swallowed up by nature's rage. Einstein mentioned that the fourth world war will be fought with sticks and stones; at this rate, a fourth world war on Earth would be lucky. However, this does not necessarily signify humanity's end. The rocket experiment that incessantly irritating billionaires such as Elon Musk entertain themselves with, may finally prove successful and play a role in the genesis of the next human race. Unfortunately, this could also entail the rich rewriting history in their favor and damning their descendants to repeat the cycle. In spite of this dismal theory, hope should be maintained, as this is simply entertaining the worst-case scenario. The human race has stubbornly managed to survive for three hundred thousand years, give or take, and owns the capabilities needed to survive a couple hundred thousand more. In our history, we pride ourselves on never giving up, so despite the odds, there's a solid chance

that our end is yet to come. I believe the determining factor, though, lies in the common people.

In the end, it will be their collective realization that will either save or damn us all.

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