



The Myth of America's Decline: Politics, Economics, and a Half Century of False Prophecies

By Josef Joffe

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) 

The Myth of America's Decline: Politics, Economics, and a Half Century of False Prophecies By Josef Joffe

A provocative and contrarian work?filled with great lessons from history?that challenges the pervasive notion that America is on the decline.

Once every decade, it is "decline time" in America. In recent years, it has been the unstoppable rise of China that has spelled "finis America." What the Chinese juggernaut is today, the Soviet Union ("We shall bury you") was in the 1950s. The Vietnam decade of the 1960s was described as America's "collective suicide attempt," while in the 1970s, the United States succumbed to Jimmy Carter's famous "malaise," as the dollar dangerously plummeted. The 1980s unquestionably belonged to a resurgent Japan, the "Rising Sun," whereas in the 1990s, Europe shone forth as an "empire by example." In the naughts, it was "Asia Rising" that became the flavor of the decade. Despite a litany of prognostications, these contenders have all fallen back, one by one.

While it may be catnip for the media to play up America as a has-been, Josef Joffe, a leading German commentator and Stanford University academic, compellingly shows that Declinism is not a cold-eyed diagnosis but a device in the style of the ancient prophets: "Thou shalt perish, unless..." Gloom is a prophecy that must be believed so that it will turn out wrong. Joffe repeatedly demonstrates how the "economic miracles" that propelled the rising tide of challengers flounder against their own limits. Hardly confined to Europe alone, Declinism has also been an especially nifty career builder for American politicians, among them Kennedy, Nixon, and Reagan, who all rode into the White House by hawking "the end is near."

Buttressing his argument with facts, Joffe demonstrates that America's future is sanguine. In contrast to the Carter years, the economic woes of the Obama era look more like a nasty migraine. By historical standards, the U.S. defense burden today is extraordinarily low, hence sustainable over the long haul. Immigration (plus a healthy birth rate) will not only keep the nation younger than China, Japan, Europe, and Russia but will continue to bring in the world's best and

brightest. Indeed, America is the "world's Ph.D. factory" both in science and engineering, while its R&D spending dwarfs the "rising rest." Its uniquely deep and wide capital market encourages innovations and continues to turn dreams into vibrant companies.

Joffe argues that it is only if America "freezes up" by enshrining privilege, closing its doors, and withdrawing from the world that it will succumb to the rigor mortis that has overwhelmed previous empires. Effortlessly mixing keen historical insights with brilliant diplomatic and economic analysis, *The Myth of America's Decline* becomes a remarkable reflection on our nation's standing in the world and an eye-opening account that challenges the pervasive and now tired notion that America is on the decline.

32 illustrations

 [Download The Myth of America's Decline: Politics, Econ ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online The Myth of America's Decline: Politics, Ec ...pdf](#)

The Myth of America's Decline: Politics, Economics, and a Half Century of False Prophecies

By Josef Joffe

The Myth of America's Decline: Politics, Economics, and a Half Century of False Prophecies By Josef Joffe

A provocative and contrarian work?filled with great lessons from history?that challenges the pervasive notion that America is on the decline.

Once every decade, it is "decline time" in America. In recent years, it has been the unstoppable rise of China that has spelled "finis America." What the Chinese juggernaut is today, the Soviet Union ("We shall bury you") was in the 1950s. The Vietnam decade of the 1960s was described as America's "collective suicide attempt," while in the 1970s, the United States succumbed to Jimmy Carter's famous "malaise," as the dollar dangerously plummeted. The 1980s unquestionably belonged to a resurgent Japan, the "Rising Sun," whereas in the 1990s, Europe shone forth as an "empire by example." In the naughts, it was "Asia Rising" that became the flavor of the decade. Despite a litany of prognostications, these contenders have all fallen back, one by one.

While it may be catnip for the media to play up America as a has-been, Josef Joffe, a leading German commentator and Stanford University academic, compellingly shows that Declinism is not a cold-eyed diagnosis but a device in the style of the ancient prophets: "Thou shalt perish, unless..." Gloom is a prophecy that must be believed so that it will turn out wrong. Joffe repeatedly demonstrates how the "economic miracles" that propelled the rising tide of challengers flounder against their own limits. Hardly confined to Europe alone, Declinism has also been an especially nifty career builder for American politicians, among them Kennedy, Nixon, and Reagan, who all rode into the White House by hawking "the end is near."

Buttressing his argument with facts, Joffe demonstrates that America's future is sanguine. In contrast to the Carter years, the economic woes of the Obama era look more like a nasty migraine. By historical standards, the U.S. defense burden today is extraordinarily low, hence sustainable over the long haul. Immigration (plus a healthy birth rate) will not only keep the nation younger than China, Japan, Europe, and Russia but will continue to bring in the world's best and brightest. Indeed, America is the "world's Ph.D. factory" both in science and engineering, while its R&D spending dwarfs the "rising rest." Its uniquely deep and wide capital market encourages innovations and continues to turn dreams into vibrant companies.

Joffe argues that it is only if America "freezes up" by enshrining privilege, closing its doors, and withdrawing from the world that it will succumb to the rigor mortis that has overwhelmed previous empires. Effortlessly mixing keen historical insights with brilliant diplomatic and economic analysis, *The Myth of America's Decline* becomes a remarkable reflection on our nation's standing in the world and an eye-opening account that challenges the pervasive and now tired notion that America is on the decline.

32 illustrations

The Myth of America's Decline: Politics, Economics, and a Half Century of False Prophecies By Josef Joffe Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #970755 in Books
- Brand: Brand: Liveright
- Published on: 2013-11-04
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.60" h x 1.20" w x 6.60" l, 1.27 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 352 pages

 [Download The Myth of America's Decline: Politics, Econ ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online The Myth of America's Decline: Politics, Ec ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online The Myth of America's Decline: Politics, Economics, and a Half Century of False Prophecies By Josef Joffe

Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Editor of Germany's esteemed weekly *Die Zeit*, Joffe (*Überpower*) builds his latest book around the idea of the U.S. as the world's default power. Joffe rebuts those doomsayers who, over the course of the last half-century, have predicted that American influence was secondary to the Soviet Union, or Japan, and now China. While Joffe's counter-argument that indeed America is not in relative decline is persuasive on the issue of military power, he sidesteps domestic issues such as education, urban deterioration, and racial conflict. Joffe's detailed catalogue of economic and civil weaknesses in the Chinese police state is the book's high point, however, with the author observing that repression has been the Chinese way since the Ming Dynasty. Aggressively capitalistic and resolutely optimistic, Joffe revisits familiar conservative talking points about American vitality, private enterprise, and individual freedom. For readers tired of blame-America-first critics or who want to find out what a smart, influential European thinks of the country's prospects, Joffe's book is a useful place to begin. (Nov.)

Review

“*The Myth of America's Decline* effectively lays to rest the belief that America has lost its preeminence. Joffe's well-documented research confirms an entirely different story: that the United States stands near or at the top of every ranking used to measure a nation's strength and vigor. It is a book that should be of interest to all who may be worried about America's future.” (Henry A. Kissinger)

“In lucid and logical style, one of Europe's leading intellectuals skewers the anti-Americanisms of his compatriots while telling the United States how to survive as the only superpower.” (Joseph S. Nye Jr., author of *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*)

“Josef Joffe is a brilliant observer of international politics. He is also a keen student?and admirer?of the United States. He combines these two passions in this remarkable reflection on America's role in the world. It is the best book on the subject in years.” (Fareed Zakaria, author of *The Future of Freedom*)

“Joseph Joffe has written a bracing and intelligent reminder that, for all its woes, America remains extraordinarily dynamic, innovative and resilient. Pessimists on the left and right should read it carefully, as should all of us.” (Fareed Zakaria, author of *The Post-American World*)

“Joffe's counter-argument that indeed America is not in relative decline is persuasive.... Joffe's detailed catalogue of economic and civil weaknesses in the Chinese police state is the book's high point, however, with the author observing that repression has been the Chinese way since the Ming Dynasty.... For readers tired of blame-America-first critics or who want to find out what a smart, influential European thinks of the country's prospects, Joffe's book is a useful place to begin.” (Publishers Weekly)

“A solid...job of refuting the declinism so feared by the right and perhaps welcomed by some even farther to the right and left. Along the way, Joffe cites some little-discussed statistics, such as the fact that China's aging population and the need for a replenished labor pool to support it fall into 'ratios [that] are far worse than any in the West.' So much for China as the rising dominant world power. There is no triumphalism here, for Joffe notes that there are plenty of problems for the United States to overcome, such as 'the breakdown of bipartisanship...intractable deficits and rising debt...[and] social polarization.'” (Kirkus Reviews)

“German intellectual Josef Joffe makes a stirring case against the Fareed Zakaria and Thomas Friedman’s of the world that America is strong and getting stronger.... While acknowledging that anything is possible and America’s best days may yet be behind us, Joffe is adept at explaining the intangible factors that will likely ensure America’s preeminence for ages to come.” (James Kirchick - The Daily Beast)

“Brave and bracing.... Joffe makes a strong case that a mix of Chinese vulnerabilities and American strengths means it is unlikely that China will replace the United States anytime soon as the center of the global system. Yet, as Joffe notes, constant anxiety about the United States’ prospects might be one of the cultural forces responsible for the country’s persistent strength; rather than resting on their laurels, Americans continually and even neurotically poke at their social fabric, looking for tears that need mending.” (Walter Russell Mead - Foreign Affairs)

About the Author

Publisher-editor of *Die Zeit* and the author of *Überpower*, Josef Joffe was educated at Swarthmore College and Harvard University. A frequent contributor to *Foreign Affairs* and *Foreign Policy*, he is a founding board member of the *American Interest*. He is a Fellow at Stanford University’s Hoover Institution and the Freeman-Spogli Institute for International Studies.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Donald Howard:

Why don't make it to become your habit? Right now, try to ready your time to do the important act, like looking for your favorite book and reading a e-book. Beside you can solve your trouble; you can add your knowledge by the e-book entitled *The Myth of America's Decline: Politics, Economics, and a Half Century of False Prophecies*. Try to the actual book *The Myth of America's Decline: Politics, Economics, and a Half Century of False Prophecies* as your good friend. It means that it can to be your friend when you truly feel alone and beside those of course make you smarter than before. Yeah, it is very fortuned for you personally. The book makes you much more confidence because you can know anything by the book. So , let us make new experience as well as knowledge with this book.

Ida Torres:

In this 21st hundred years, people become competitive in most way. By being competitive at this point, people have do something to make them survives, being in the middle of the particular crowded place and notice simply by surrounding. One thing that at times many people have underestimated this for a while is reading. Yeah, by reading a e-book your ability to survive enhance then having chance to stand up than other is high. For you who want to start reading any book, we give you that *The Myth of America's Decline: Politics, Economics, and a Half Century of False Prophecies* book as basic and daily reading publication. Why, because this book is greater than just a book.

Marian Knight:

Are you kind of busy person, only have 10 or perhaps 15 minute in your morning to upgrading your mind skill or thinking skill even analytical thinking? Then you are experiencing problem with the book than can

satisfy your limited time to read it because this all time you only find guide that need more time to be learn. The Myth of America's Decline: Politics, Economics, and a Half Century of False Prophecies can be your answer as it can be read by anyone who have those short free time problems.

Joshua Stpierre:

Beside that The Myth of America's Decline: Politics, Economics, and a Half Century of False Prophecies in your phone, it could give you a way to get nearer to the new knowledge or data. The information and the knowledge you will got here is fresh from oven so don't be worry if you feel like an old people live in narrow village. It is good thing to have The Myth of America's Decline: Politics, Economics, and a Half Century of False Prophecies because this book offers for your requirements readable information. Do you at times have book but you do not get what it's facts concerning. Oh come on, that wil happen if you have this within your hand. The Enjoyable agreement here cannot be questionable, like treasuring beautiful island. So do you still want to miss this? Find this book and also read it from at this point!

Download and Read Online The Myth of America's Decline: Politics, Economics, and a Half Century of False Prophecies By Josef Joffe #9B3M7RWYEG2

Read The Myth of America's Decline: Politics, Economics, and a Half Century of False Prophecies By Josef Joffe for online ebook

The Myth of America's Decline: Politics, Economics, and a Half Century of False Prophecies By Josef Joffe Free PDF d0wnl0ad, audio books, books to read, good books to read, cheap books, good books, online books, books online, book reviews epub, read books online, books to read online, online library, greatbooks to read, PDF best books to read, top books to read The Myth of America's Decline: Politics, Economics, and a Half Century of False Prophecies By Josef Joffe books to read online.

Online The Myth of America's Decline: Politics, Economics, and a Half Century of False Prophecies By Josef Joffe ebook PDF download

The Myth of America's Decline: Politics, Economics, and a Half Century of False Prophecies By Josef Joffe Doc

The Myth of America's Decline: Politics, Economics, and a Half Century of False Prophecies By Josef Joffe MobiPocket

The Myth of America's Decline: Politics, Economics, and a Half Century of False Prophecies By Josef Joffe EPub

9B3M7RWYEG2: The Myth of America's Decline: Politics, Economics, and a Half Century of False Prophecies By Josef Joffe