

Great Nations Win Without Fighting

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Outline

I Introduction

II Great Nations Have Visions, Not Weapons

A. Social upbringing for lasting Impact

1. Ancient Civilizations guide modern world (e.g. Mesopotamia and Indus Valley Civilization)
2. Promotion of tradition and culture for global attention (e.g. Martial Arts: a culture of Japan)
3. Peaceful Social Mobilization to secure rights (e.g. Civil rights movement in the U.S.)

B. Economic advantage that enables dominance

1. Technological innovations lead the modern world (e.g. China's Shenzhen Model)

2. Playing a leading role in international organizations to promote global betterment (e.g. China's role in BRICS and SCO) (2)

3. Exclusive government institutions improve transparency and public service delivery (e.g. Singapore's MPH model)

C. Actively engaging in politics as a leader for peace

1. The role of U.S. leadership during the Cuban Missile Crisis (e.g. Robert F. Kennedy's diplomacy)

2. Bridging rifts to secure multifaceted benefits (e.g. Iran-Saudi peace deal)

3. Focus on regional connectivity and relationship-building (e.g. Abraham accords)

III Major Challenges Undermine Peace and Intensify Atrocities

A. Warmongering leaders violate the ICJ's rulings (e.g. Israel's actions)

in Palestine)

B. Protectionist policies curtailed positive aspects globally (e.g. Tariff wars)

C. Misuse of veto power subverts the peace process (e.g. PS-veto in the UNSC)

IV A Way Forward

A. Technological advancement and innovation to drive global progress (e.g. 1000+ AI and Tech startups in China)

B. Stronger economic engagement through connectivity and regional cooperation (China's BRI project)

C. Prioritize diplomacy to win at the table, not on the battlefield (e.g. better education at the grassroots level)

V Conclusion

The Essay

From the beginning, the world has witnessed the rise and fall of various

empires. The wars fought either on the plains of Persia or Panipat did not stabilize their empires, but the visionary civilization of Egypt remains the center of attention even in this modern era. Hence, it proves that great nations are established on vision, not on wars. The greatest achievement of humankind is globalization, which connected the world. Every nation is divided by boundaries, and these boundaries define the approaches of the state. Every nation poses unique abilities that requires attention. It is notable that Rome was not build in a single day, but visionary policies and good education paved the way for its future. Visionary policies strengthen the foundations of a nation and demonstrate its wonders in the long run. Victories on the battlefield do not last long, but architecture, art, and literature reflect the true spirit of a nation. Great nations focus in social, economic and political developments despite various challenges domestically and internationally, (4)

they are able to lead the world due to their upper hand in innovation and policy formation. (5)

Many civilizations look good on the pages of history, but great civilizations leave behind tangible fragments of their existence from which the modern world benefits. Great nations possess both national integration and common goals. They do not merely transfer skills but also educate their offsprings. Moreover, better laws, infrastructure, and sustainable urbanization are equally important for social development. For instance, the Mesopotamian civilization was renowned for its laws and education, while the Indus Valley civilization was known for its advanced drainage systems and infrastructure. These great nations neither glorified wars nor left behind significant signs of warfare, yet the modern world continues to draw inspiration from these ancient civilizations. Tradition and culture reflect the historical roots of nations. Many great

⑥ nations spread their culture to enhance their soft image globally. In addition, they attract the attention of other nations through their uniqueness. Promoting culture and tradition is important to showcase the soft side of a nation. For example, Japan has used cultural exports such as tea ceremonies, anime and martial arts to build global soft power. They have shared their culture without any major conflict or war. Such cultural exchanges unite nations and encourage shared practices.

Peaceful protests and strikes are the basic human right, but what about the times when colonial and fascist rule were the norm? Great nations provide opportunities for meaningful debates and encourage critical analysis. It is evident that many writers have played a vital role in reshaping national progress, but some people have taken to the streets to fight for their rights, when they could not earn them through pen. The civil rights and equality movements in

the U.S. is a prime example, as it paved the way for the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This landmark legislation outlawed discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex and national origin. It stands as one of the greatest achievements for the people of the United States. They secured their basic rights without an enormous loss of life.

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Technological innovations and adaptations are transforming the modern world. The technological revolution is reshaping the world just like the Industrial revolution did in 19th century. It is emerging in every sector of human life, whether it requires physical strength or cognitive ability. Great nations like China are redefining global dynamics through their technological advancements. For instance, the "Shenzhen model" revamped a small fishing village into a global tech hub, hosting giants like Huawei, Tencent, and hundreds of AI and semiconductor firms. These remarkable steps by China

reflect that great nations are build with great visions. (8)

Great nations uphold a special place in international organizations to lead the world. Domestic stability is crucial for performing effectively on the global stage. Developing countries and emerging economies join these organizations to gain benefits. However, wealthy nations can turn a sow's ear into a silk purse. For example, China's leading role in BRICS and SCO promotes economic development and regional cooperation. This demonstrates a vision that is not limited to its own boundaries but seeks to extend its influence globally. Great nations achieve recognition through their contributions to global betterment.

Exclusive government institutions promote transparency and improve public service delivery. Great nations follow a system of checks and balances, and work beyond personal gains. Moreover, Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson

(9)

clearly defines the difference between inclusive and exclusive institutions in their book "Why Nations Fail". Every institution within a country must uphold meritocracy, pragmatism and honesty for better outcomes like Singapore. Great nations win in economic sphere by promoting opportunities and culture of entrepreneurship. Hence, this demonstrates that great nations prioritize their economy first and then gain political leverage globally.

Great nations like the U.S. prioritized diplomacy during Cuban Missile Crisis despite possessing a substantial atomic stock pile. The U.S. discovered 42 medium- and intermediate-range Soviet missiles in Cuba through U-2 spy plane (1962). In fact, great nations always prefer sustainable relationships and avoid serious confrontations with both friends and foes. The diplomatic success of the U.S. demonstrated that peace is achievable without war. According to the United Nations, the crisis brought the world "the closest it has ever come to nuclear war." This reflects the gravity

of the situation, which was averted through exceptional diplomacy. Ordinary states are dependent, but great ones thrive in political sphere.

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Great Nations promote peace and bridge the gaps between states to secure multifaceted benefits. This provides political leverage not only in the states but also globally. Many countries seek to engage with them because their voices will be heard. In global politics, a nation's voice echoes when it excels in both social and economic spheres. For instance, consider China's diplomacy in the peace deal between Iran and Saudi Arabia, two adversaries for decades. China neutralized their confrontation due to its strong political influence. Both nations agreed to reopen embassies, respect each other's sovereignty, and resume security cooperation. This demonstrates that great nations adopt multiple approaches to navigate other countries towards them.

Great nations develop connectivity and normalize relationships within a

region for their national interest. States develop allies for their national interest, and economic development. Many states openly support their allies, like the U.S. supports Israel in the Middle East. States stabilize and enhance relationships to achieve maximum benefits from cooperation. For example, the Abraham Accords paved the way for normalization in the Middle East. States firmly see friends and foes through the lens of national interest, and they design policies accordingly to maximize their benefits. Great nations prioritize the national interest over everything, and that is what makes them great. (11)

The world is inching towards modernization and globalization. Therefore, the arguments presented by great nations may seem justifiable; however, various challenges have curtailed global prosperity. Warmongering leaders from East to West have subverted peace and prosperity in a globalized world. The beating drums of war and the violations of International Court of

Justice (ICJ) rulings reflect a clear dereliction of duty. According to Human Right Watch, Israel has continued to block or obstruct the provision of essential services and humanitarian aid to Gaza despite the ICJ's ruling. The rogue state's war crimes and genocide in Palestine have set a dangerous precedent for the world, revealing the harsh realities of realpolitik. The aggressive designs of states, whether through direct attack or deliberate starvation demonstrate their irresponsibility. In short, those states that prefer war over peace lose their legitimacy in the eyes of the world despite their powerful lobbying.

Protectionist policies have become the new status quo, but they come at a huge cost in the modern world. West dominated policies are a major factor weakening international trade and businesses. The dominance of dollar and the vast size of the U.S. market compel nations to expand their production to gain access

to the American market. However, protectionist measures in the form of tariffs hinder the growth of emerging economies. According to the World Bank, global growth slowed from 2.9% in 2018 to 1.6% in 2023, partly due to tariff wars. The European Union recently raised tariffs on steel imports to 50% to protect its domestic industries. These measures show that great nations are undermining long-term prosperity for temporary gains. Such steps could push major economies toward stagnation and diminish their global influence.

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is a platform for meaningful negotiations and diplomacy, but the harsh behavior of the Permanent Five (P5) has hindered the peace process. The UNSC's efforts were derailed by a single veto despite the majority's support. The recent behavior of the U.S. struck the wrong chord and left a stain on the global conscience. The U.S. vetoed the resolution on September 18, 2025, despite 14 of the 15 council members

in favour of an "immediate, unconditional, (14)
and permanent ceasefire" in Gaza. This
demonstrates how powerful nations can
snatch victories from seemingly impossible
situations, but such actions make them
vulnerable on the global stage. True peace
can only be achieved when decisions align
with moral principles.

The world is standing at a critical
juncture of technological advancement and
innovation, which requires robust strategies.
Great nations heavily invest in technology
and innovation to dominate the global
stage. However, wars and conflicts look good
on the pages of history, but true power
lies in making others dependent on
technology, fostering a healthy form of
reliance. For example, China has become a
global power by transforming itself into
an AI and technology hub, home to over
1,000 AI startups and accounting for 20%
of global AI research output. Indeed, China
is winning many battles not through
hard power but through soft power. Great
nations like China, support innovation and

respect for diversity, which serves as a cornerstones of their success.

Great nations do not lunch blindly. In contrast, they develop mega projects that extent beyond their borders and expand into regional and international arenas to achieve better outcomes. In the modern world, improved connectivity and fast shipping are crucial for trade. Many states like China and India, are enhancing their networks and expand their trade. China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and India's India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) are prime examples of how nations expand their network that helps them to transform into great powers. Long-term vision and political will, combined with active participation from the business community, can significantly strengthen economic engagement.

Battle does not secure peace, but diplomacy does. The vast empires of Napoleon and the Mughals vanished, yet the Treaty of Windsor of 1386 still exists. This manifests the enduring power of

diplomacy. This powerful tool yields desired results only through quality education. Education at the grassroots level strengthens a country's soft image, cultivate skills and build strong argument for beneficial agreements. A 2024 Science-Direct article shows that education exchanges enhance soft power by improving international perceptions and foster ties, as returning students often advocate for their host countries. It is a positive step that endorse cultural exchange and good education. Great nations gain influence not through the size of their arsenals, but through the strength of their dialogue.

To cap it all, ordinary nations try to win through hard power, but great nations always prefer soft power to convince the majority. Great nations strengthen the relations with other states in social, political, and economic spheres, avoiding confrontations that may undermine their dominance. They learn from a chequered history, apply their skills in the present

and design policies for a better future.

The Onus is on states to formulate robust strategies to maximize their benefits.

Great nations and emerging economies around the world plan their long-term goal and ambitions for 2050. However, ambitions without planning is a recipe for frustration. Many developing states can succeed by following in the footsteps of great nations. A positive ecosystem fosters growth and productivity within a communities.

The world has moved away from the glorification of war and is moving towards collective development. A groundbreaking approach of collective victory that benefits all is the way forward.

"The real victory was not on the battlefield but at the negotiating table."

~Odd Arne Westad

xxx The End xxx