The Myth Of America's Decline: Leading The World Economy Into The 1990s

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America has been the world's leading economic power since the 1870s. US share of world GDP in 1945 is estimated to have been about 50%, it is now about 25%. In the 1960s the US was the global leader in just about everything: business, technology, and culture. This is based on calculations that take into account the cost of living. Joffe does not believe that China will pose a long-term threat to US hegemony. Some relative decline was inevitable, but Joffe claims that American politicians have liked to talk the country down in order to win elections. Kennedy, Reagan, and Obama all told the public that the country was in decline. Joffe writes: "The country is on the skids, but tomorrow it will rise again - if only you, the people, will anoint me as your leader." America-bashing predates even America itself, with French Enlightenment philosophes claiming that the colony was doomed, and one critic reporting that the colony's population was "astonishingly idiotic [and] enervated." As the United States became a superpower after World War II, a more virulent, politically charged form of declinism emerged in the 1950s amid hysteria that "the Russians are coming." Joe Joffe is one of the world's keenest geopolitical thinkers. This book is a valuable corrective for those caught up in the latest wave of American declinism. Joffe's counter-argument that indeed America is not in relative decline is persuasive. The Myth of America's Decline effectively lays to rest the belief that America has lost its preeminence.