

What America Does Best

We are in a fresh round of declinism – understandably, after borrowing nearly \$5 trillion in less than three years and having very little to show for it. Pundit strives with op-ed writer to find the latest angle on America’s descent: We are broke; we are poorly educated; we are uncompetitive; we have gone soft; our political institutions are broken; and on and on. The Obama administration does its part, with sloganeering like “reset,” “lead from behind,” “post-American world,” and America as exceptional only to the degree that all nations feel exceptional.

This is not new. In the late 1930s, the New Germany and its autobahns were supposed to show Depression-plagued America how national will could unite a people to do great things. After all, they had Triumph of the Will Nuremberg rallies; we still had Hoovervilles. They flew sleek Me-109s; we flew lumbering cloth-covered Brewster Buffaloes. We, the victors of a world war, were determined never to repeat it; they, the losers, were eager to try it again.

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