

Foreign relations

**An unchallenged US is a divided US.
It follows that America's best hope of
retaining some cohesion in the coming
decades is a mighty China.**

**What is disastrous for its relative power
in the world might turn out to be
a godsend for its internal cohesion.**

Decline has its uses.

**The US requires two things of an enemy: vast
scale (to induce fear) and a different model
of government (for a sense of otherness).**

**The absence of the first is why al-Qaeda
turned out to be such a fleeting adhesive
after the September 11, 2001 atrocities. ...**

**As to the second condition, boom-era Japan,
a fellow democracy, lacked it and so never
crossed from daunting commercial rival
to nation-binding enemy.**

Janan Ganesh, Financial Times, 2021/02/16