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# WORLD ON FIRE

How Exporting Free Market Democracy  
Breeds Ethnic Hatred and Global Instability

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## Why They Hate Us

### *America as a Global Market-Dominant Minority*

I found myself in the middle of an argument the other evening, one of many I've been in since September 11, 2001. An outspoken Chinese friend of mine, Mei Lan—born and raised in China but about to become an American citizen, having just married a native New Yorker—asserted at a Manhattan dinner party that 99 percent of all Chinese in China were happy about the attack on America. This prompted an outcry among the American guests. “*Ninety-nine?*” someone asked incredulously. “What pollster produced *that* statistic?” To which Mei Lan replied, “Let’s not get hung up on numbers. Face it, deal with it—Americans are hated.”

“People like you spreading misinformation, Mei Lan, are exactly the problem,” another guest heatedly interjected. He had visited China the previous summer. The Chinese were nice people, he explained, who didn’t always agree with American policies but who certainly didn’t hate us and in fact wanted to learn from us. Another guest, an international lawyer, agreed, and described all the sympathetic e-mails he had received from Hong Kong and Shanghai after September 11.

Mei Lan then brought up the topic of American hypocrisy about human rights, and the conversation further deteriorated after that.

In the aftermath of September 11, many Americans have experienced some version of this conversation, debating the extent of anti-Americanism throughout the world. A common problem is the tendency to generalize from an *n* of 2 or 3. “I got e-mails from my friends in Mexico and Chile. Anti-Americanism in Latin America is wildly exagger-

ated.” Or: “My Palestinian friend e-mailed me expressing horror about the World Trade Center. The U.S. media presents a totally distorted picture of anti-Americanism over there.”

Of course not all of the Middle East hates us. Nor does 99 percent of China hate us. The non-Western world is far from monolithic in its attitudes toward America; generalizations on this subject are especially perilous. Nevertheless, it is sadly untrue that Americans are loved and admired around the world. The existence of some anti-American resentment and objections to U.S. foreign policy was apparent to anyone who traveled outside the United States in recent years. But the depth and passion of anti-American hatred that was revealed on September 11 was a profound, nationwide shock.

“Once there was a time when the most evil people on earth were ashamed to write their crime across the heavens,” writes Neal Ascheron. This was not so of September 11, 2001. “Manhattan that morning was a diagram, a blue bar-chart with columns which were tall or not so tall. A silver cursor passed across the screen and clicked silently on the tallest column, which turned red and black and presently vanished. *This is how we delete you.* The cursor returned and clicked on the second column. Presently a thing like a solid grey-white cauliflower rose until it was a mountain covering all south Manhattan. *This is how we bury you.* It was the most open atrocity of all time, a simple demonstration written on the sky which everyone in the world was invited to watch. *This is how much we hate you.*”

Why do they hate us? Amidst grief, anger, patriotism, defiance, and retaliation, stunned Americans have repeatedly returned to this question. This chapter will offer one, certainly not the only, answer.

America today has become the world’s market-dominant minority. Like the Chinese in the Philippines or the Lebanese in West Africa, Americans have attained heights of wealth and economic power wildly disproportionate to our tiny numbers. Just 4 percent of the world’s population, America dominates every aspect—financial, cultural, technological—of the global free markets we have come to symbolize. From the Islamic world to China, from our NATO allies to the southern hemisphere, America is seen (not incorrectly) as the engine and principal beneficiary of global marketization. For this—for our extraordinary

market dominance, our seeming global invincibility—we have earned the envy, fear, and resentment of much of the rest of the world. Of course, not everyone who envies and resents us wants to destroy us. But there are those who do.

Anti-Americanism around the world is, among other things, an expression at the global level of popular, demagogue-fueled mass resentment against a market-dominant minority. The expression of this resentment varies enormously in intensity, ranging from benign grumbling by French bureaucrats about bad films and bad food to strategic alliances between Russia and China to terrorism. Like the ethnic cleansing of Tutsi in Rwanda, the suicidal mass murder of three thousand innocents on American soil was the ultimate expression of group hatred. The attack on America was an act of revenge directly analogous to the bloody confiscations of white land in Zimbabwe, or the anti-Chinese riots and looting in Indonesia—fueled by the same feelings of envy, grievance, inferiority, powerlessness, and humiliation.

As with Jewish market dominance in the Middle East or Kikuyu economic success in Kenya, the reasons for America's global market dominance are the subject of bitter dispute. On one view, American economic success is the result of our superior institutions, entrepreneurial spirit, and generations of hard work. On another view, our wealth and power are the spoils of plunder, exploitation, and exclusion. Even within the United States, tempers flare over which view is correct. The reality is that both carry more than a grain of truth.

On the other hand, there is astonishing global consensus on one point: that America has become the world's unrivaled market-dominant minority.

### *Market-Dominant America*

Whether you ask an Egyptian imam, a Wall Street banker, or France's foreign minister, there is striking agreement that the United States, as a country, dominates, drives, perpetuates, and disproportionately prospers from the spread of global capitalism around the world. The facts support this perception.

To begin with, it is barely exaggerating to say that the United States

is responsible for the worldwide spread of free markets. No one has established this more evocatively than Thomas Friedman in *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*. Today's universal prescription of Privatization + Deregulation + Economic Liberalization "was made in America and Great Britain," writes Friedman. The Electronic Herd—Friedman's term for today's millions of anonymous traders and investors "moving money around the world with the click of a mouse"—"is led by American Wall Street bulls."

At the same time, "[t]he most powerful agent pressuring other countries to open their markets for free trade and free investment is Uncle Sam, and America's global armed forces keep these markets and sea lanes open for globalization . . ." As a historical matter, it was America, determined after the Second World War to promote capitalism and contain Communism, that drove the creation of the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, GATT, and most recently the World Trade Organization as well as a host of other free-market-oriented international institutions. In other words, writes Friedman, "even within the Cold War system America was hard at work building out a global economy for its own economic and strategic reasons."

Today, America sits on top of the global economy. As with the market-dominant Chinese in Southeast Asia, global marketization has intensified America's breathtakingly disproportionate wealth and economic power. "Not so long ago," writes Mort Zuckerman, editor-in-chief of *U.S. News & World Report*, "our preoccupation was with how America could prosper in a new era of global competition against a relentless Japan, a uniting Europe, and the Pacific Rim low-wage economies." But in fact America emerged "triumphant in the new world economy."<sup>3</sup> According to U.S. government statistics for 2000, despite concerns about economic slowdown and recession, the United States, with a GDP of \$9 trillion, is "the largest and most technologically powerful economy in the world" as well as "the leading industrial power in the world." Our exports in 2000 totaled \$776 billion; this figure does not include the roughly \$2 trillion worth of goods produced, assembled, and sold overseas by foreign affiliates of American companies.<sup>4</sup>

Needless to say, these blanket statistics hide enormous inequalities within the United States. In 1999, Bill Gates "owned as much as 40 per-

cent of the American population put together," writes Thomas Frank. Along with Gates, hundreds of thousands of American entrepreneurs, corporate managers, and just ordinary investors have become multimillionaires, even multibillionaires, practically overnight. Between 1979 and 1997, and adjusting for inflation, reports economist Paul Krugman, the income of families in the middle of the U.S. income distribution rose 9 percent, while the income of families in the top 1 percent rose 140 percent. Meanwhile, an estimated 60 million Americans have had to accept stagnant or even declining earnings in the 1990s and, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, 34.5 million Americans (12.7 percent of the population) were officially poor in 1998. Drug addiction and violence continue to be looming problems in our inner cities. "Only the sadly impoverished and chaotic Russian Federation," notes Edward Luttwak, "has as great a proportion of its citizens in prison as the affluent and well-governed United States . . ."<sup>5</sup>

None of these internal blots lessens America's market dominance at the global level. The American dollar is the world's dominant currency; even *jihadis* hold their assets in dollars. English is the world's dominant language; globalization is making this increasingly so. American multinationals are the most powerful and visible in the world. It was fashionable for a while to describe multinationals as "citizens of the world," beholden to no nation. But for most of the world today there is no question that Nike, Gap, Reebok, Starbucks, Ben & Jerry's, Wal-Mart, Coca-Cola, Disney, Levi Strauss, and Toys "Я" Us are American. It is precisely the American-ness of these brands that makes them irresistible to so many—and despicable to so many others.

American fast food is globally dominant. Enough has been written elsewhere about McDonald's, but it's also worth noting that Pizza Hut operates in 86 countries around the world, Kentucky Fried Chicken in 82, and Burger King in 58, including Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia. American stock exchanges are globally dominant; this is true despite the explosion of new stock exchanges from Shanghai to the Ivory Coast. American media are market dominant: "Where once the BBC let nation speak unto nation," a British columnist recently lamented, "now we are one world under CNN."<sup>6</sup> Perhaps most important, American firms are utterly dominant in the new information technology. Indeed,

for the rest of the world, American economic success is exemplified by the "New Titans" of information technology: the legendary Microsoft and Intel as well as Apple, Novell, Cisco, Oracle, Sun Microsystems, America Online, and so on.

Global markets may well hold the key to long-term greater prosperity for the poor and not-so-poor countries of the world. But like Latin America's European-blooded elites or Southeast Asia's hypercapitalized Chinese, America has a massive head start over the rest of the world. Thomas Friedman suggested a few years ago that America is "the country that benefits most from today's global integration." Friedman was recently corroborated by a 2002 *New York Times* report indicating that the United States, rather than the developing world, has been the overwhelming beneficiary of globalization. "Perhaps aside from China the only country that appears to have benefited unambiguously from the trend toward open markets worldwide is the United States, where a huge inflow of capital has helped allow Americans to spend more than they save, and to import more than they export." The report goes on to quote financier and philanthropist George Soros: "The trend of globalization is that surplus capital is moving from the periphery countries to the center, which is the United States."<sup>7</sup>

### *Global Backlash*

Like the market dominance of any minority in the world, American market dominance provokes intense resentment. Indeed, the rest of the world, if anything, exaggerates America's disproportionate wealth and power. Just as Russian hate-sites insist that "Yids control the entire economy," and just as indigenous Burmans often say that "the Chinese control all Mandalay," many in the world today see America as "controlling the global economy," either through its multinationals or its "puppets," the World Bank and International Monetary Fund.

Like resentment against market-dominant minorities in individual countries, anti-Americanism around the world is not a monolithic phenomenon. In some countries, anti-Americanism is particularly fierce among the elite, who in turn foment anti-American sentiment among the lower classes. Some have suggested that this is true of France. In



other countries, anti-Americanism originates among the lower classes, who—even as they covet Nike sweatshirts and Madonna CDs—see and resent America as the powerful extension and protector of their own corrupt elites. This is true of many developing countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

As with resentment against other market-dominant minorities, anti-Americanism is often a perverse blend of admiration, awe, and envy on one hand and seething hatred, disgust, and contempt on the other. Thus, for millions, perhaps billions, around the world, America is “arrogant,” “hegemonic,” and “vapidly materialistic”—but also where they would go if only they could. In Beijing, for example, many of the same screaming students who bombarded the U.S. embassy with stones after the U.S. bombing of China’s embassy in Belgrade returned a few weeks later to line up for U.S. visas. One of them, interviewed by *U.S. News & World Report*, explained that he wanted to attend graduate school in America and that “If I could have good opportunities in the U.S., I wouldn’t mind U.S. hegemony too much.” Similarly, in another interview with *U.S. News*, Oscar Arias Sanchez, Costa Rica’s former president who won a Nobel Peace Prize for brokering peace in Central America, charged that America “want[s] to tell the world what to do. You are like the Romans of the new millennium.” Yet Arias vacations in the United States and has a son at Harvard and a daughter who graduated from Boston College.<sup>8</sup>

Another example of the world’s love-hate relationship with the United States was seen when a quarter million Brazilians packed into a Rio de Janeiro concert hall to ogle U.S. teen pop idol Britney Spears. Delirious with adoration, the crowd nevertheless hissed and booed when she waved an American flag.<sup>9</sup> And many, of course, have pointed out that an ironic number of the cheering Palestinians, captured on television celebrating the destruction of the World Trade Center, were wearing American T-shirts, sneakers, and baseball caps.

Along with many other market-dominant minorities around the world, Americans are often accused of being “greedy,” “selfish,” and ungenerous, especially given our spectacular wealth. European governments frequently point out that America’s foreign aid budget is a much smaller percentage of GNP than that of other OECD countries.<sup>10</sup> Further, what foreign aid we provide is often given on the condition that

it be spent on U.S. products or consultants. (Japan is just as guilty of this as we are.) Moreover, the U.S. government is quite willing to make exceptions to our embrace of free trade for our own benefit; our farming subsidies enrage even our Australian allies. American rebuttals to these charges are, by now, also familiar. What government in the world *isn't* self-interested? What country has done more for the rest of the world than America? Who bailed out Europe in the Second World War?

It is important to stress, however, that in some respects the analogy between market-dominant minorities at the national level and America as a market-dominant minority at the global level is imperfect. For one thing, at least from an internal United States perspective, Americans are not a single "ethnicity." On the contrary, from our own point of view America is the quintessential multiethnic country, a self-proclaimed mosaic or melting pot. In addition, the "rest of the world" is not a single self-perceived "indigenous majority," in the same way that, say, blacks feel that they are "indigenous" in South Africa as opposed to whites.

On the other hand, ethnicity in any context is always a highly subjective and artificial phenomenon. This is true even in South Africa, where, at first glance, ethnic lines seem to be particularly stark. In fact, South African "whites" include diverse peoples of British, Dutch, and German Jewish origins. South Africa's whites are viewed as (and view themselves as) a single "ethnicity" only against the background of the country's predominantly "black" majority, which itself is made up of numerous different African tribes, speaking mutually incomprehensible tongues. Nevertheless, the fact remains that, as a matter of general perception, the major social fault line in South Africa today is between blacks and whites and, moreover, that whites are widely viewed as a market-dominant "outsider" minority, wielding egregiously disproportionate economic power vis-à-vis the country's indigenous majority. America occupies much the same role at the global level.

We are viewed by the rest of the world as one "people"—and for that matter, a "white" people. As one U.S. Department of Justice official put it, "with all acknowledgment to Colin Powell and Norman Mineta, the world surely thinks of our 'face' as white." More fundamentally, all over the world, American products, companies, and investors are viewed as "outsider" threats to the legitimate "indigenous" society.

America's geographic separation is no bar to this perception of Americans as a global market-dominant minority. On the contrary, most market-dominant minorities—among them the Chinese in Southeast Asia, Lebanese in West Africa, Indians in East Africa, and whites in South Africa—are all the more resented precisely because of their "insular" self-segregation. Indeed, America's increasingly restrictive immigration policies are another source of hostility for the rest of the world.

But America is unusual, compared to other market-dominant minorities, in numerous additional ways. As well as being an economic superpower, America is the world's preeminent military, political, and cultural power. As a result, global anti-Americanism reflects not only our market dominance, but also our military unilateralism, our foreign policy, and our cultural "hegemony"—all of which have provoked intense resentment in many quarters. Yet even in these respects, America's position is surprisingly comparable to that of many market-dominant minorities.

The "entrepreneurial" market-dominant minorities of Southeast Asia and Africa tend to be politically weak. Often just 1 to 2 percent of the population, they have little or no military strength or influence on governmental policy (other than through cronyism, which in any case benefits only a very few). But this is not true, for example, of the light-skinned elites in Latin America, the Tutsi minority in pregenocide Rwanda, or the white minority in apartheid South Africa and Rhodesia. All these minorities are or were both economically and politically dominant, typically controlling every sector of governmental policy and the military as well. In all such cases, as with America today, there is much more than economics behind the often-violent animosity felt by the frustrated majority. At the same time, the humiliation or oppression felt by the majority because of the minority's political dominance is inextricably woven together with, and immeasurably magnified by, the minority's wealth and economic power.

Similarly, while America's global cultural dominance today is historically unique—and certainly not reducible to mere economics—the world's reaction against American "cultural imperialism" is again strikingly parallel to standard reactions against market-dominant minorities. A characteristic feature of societies with economically powerful "out-

sider" minorities is the reported feeling, on the part of the "indigenous" majority, that they are in danger of being "swallowed up," their culture taken over or eradicated by the minority.<sup>11</sup> Thus in Rwanda, genocide was justified in the name of Hutu "self-protection" and Hutu "self-defense." A constant theme among Russian hatemongers today is that Jews "are waging a destructive campaign against our fatherland and its morality, language, culture and beliefs." A pervasive sentiment in Burma, bitterly expressed by a Mandalayan businessman, is that "we are becoming a Chinese colony." The tiny market-dominant Chinese minority, it is said, "are smothering us"; "they have turned us into second-class citizens in our own towns." "Burmese identity is being destroyed." Such sentiments are highly analogous to those expressed today by groups all over the world fearful of the invasion of American products and entertainment.

Finally, and most important, the United States differs from other market-dominant minorities in that the non-American majority is not organized in a single national territory. With the exception of the previous chapter on the Middle East, this book has focused on dynamics internal to nations: specifically, the danger, within individual countries, of rapid democratization in the face of pervasive poverty and a resented "outsider" market-dominant minority. In the case of America as a global market-dominant minority, however, there is no counterpart to democracy at the global level. Notwithstanding various efforts at global integration and the rise of numerous international political organizations, the truth is that there is no democratically elected "world government."

The closest thing there is to a world democratic government is the United Nations General Assembly, where each member state gets a vote and where, as a result, the Third World commands a substantial majority of the votes. (Of course, the national representatives to the General Assembly are usually not democratically elected.) And indeed, one finds in the General Assembly precisely the anti-U.S. and anti-market reactions that America's market-dominance would be expected to produce. These reactions range from Resolution No. 3281 in 1974, which purported to expand the authority of member states to "regulate," "supervise," and "expropriate" multinational corporations within their jurisdiction (the vote was 120 to 6, with the dissenters being five Western

European countries and the United States), to the May 2001 ouster of the United States from the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (while Sudan and Sierra Leone, for example, remain members).<sup>12</sup>

But the anti-Americanism expressed in the United Nations is largely symbolic and rhetorical. The real outlets are elsewhere. Against America's global market-dominance, there is not one but a host of nationalist, majority-supported backlashes, spread throughout the world, varying widely in quality and intensity, ranging from the friendly to the homicidal.

### *Friendly Anti-Americanism*

Anti-Americanism extends to every corner of the world. This includes even the Western countries most similar to us: the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. In all these countries, the September 11 attack on America brought an instantaneous show of sympathy and support for the United States, both from the governments and from individual citizens. (Terrorism, after all, presents a common threat; bin Laden demonized not only the United States but all Western countries, and plots by terrorists thought to be associated with bin Laden have been uncovered in England, Canada, and New Zealand.) At the same time, in each country, heated debates erupted over the causes of the attack and the extent to which American attitudes or policies had contributed. There were also widespread concerns that the United States, with its military might and characteristic self-absorption, might respond with excessive force, acting unilaterally without taking into account the interests of its allies.

In the United Kingdom, America's staunchest ally in the war in Afghanistan, anti-American feeling has increased since September 11, according to a recent article in the *Guardian*. Citing a survey taken by a leading advertising agency, the *Guardian* reported that "British consumers have become more distrustful of overtly American brands" and that "more than two-thirds of British consumers are concerned the world is becoming too Americanised." As a result, there is a growing trend away from American brands to what advertising strategists call "glocal" brands—brands that savvy multinationals successfully portray as

“locally relevant.” Somewhat surprisingly, one of the leaders in “glocal” marketing was said to be McDonald’s, which “has adapted itself so successfully to foreign markets that consumers outside the US often believe it is a domestic company.” (In England, McDonald’s employs “[o]vertly British advertising” and sells “British favourites, such as curry, alongside Big Macs.”) By contrast, companies like Gap and Starbucks suffer because they market themselves as distinctly American.<sup>13</sup>

Generally speaking, however, resentment against the United States in all these English-speaking countries is, as one Canadian put it, “good-natured anti-Americanism,” unlikely to become a major election issue or to be translated into anti-American policies. This is not to say that anti-Americanism in these countries is not serious, or even, in some quarters, ferocious. There are an appalling number of Australian websites filled with assertions that the United States “deserved” the attacks of September 11. Mary Beard, a university lecturer in classics at the University of Cambridge, enraged many American readers when she described in the *London Review of Books* the “feeling that however tactfully you dress it up, the United States had it coming. That is, of course, what many people openly or privately think. World bullies, even if their heart is in the right place, will in the end pay the price.”<sup>14</sup> But these views are probably unusual in their harshness. For the most part, historical connections, cultural affinities, and high standards of living go a long way in blunting anti-Americanism in our fellow English-speaking Western nations.

### *The European Response*

It is probably safe to say that anti-American feeling is more intense in continental Europe than in, say, Canada or England. In part, this is because American culture—including not just our cowboy capitalism but language, food, and political traditions—clashes more directly, or at least more obviously, with European culture. To be sure, our Canadian neighbors hate being mistaken for Americans and, along with Australians and New Zealanders, constantly stress how different in “national character” their countries are from the United States (for example, “humble” and “quietly patriotic” as opposed to “arrogant,” “preachy,” and “hilariously

oblivious to the rest of the world"). Nevertheless, more Europeans seem to perceive America's position of world power as a fundamental threat to their national identity.

Nowhere is this more plain than in France, where the interplay between Americanization and anti-Americanism has produced something of a national existential crisis. In the 1960s, French authors were already churning out books like René Etiemble's *Parlez-vous français?* (1964) and Jean Jacques Servan-Schreiber's *Le défi américain* (1967). The former called for a campaign to save French culture from "the American 'air-conditioned nightmare.'" The latter started the publication *L'Express* to offer a French-language alternative to America's *Time* and *Newsweek*.<sup>15</sup>

Today, with the United States now the world's sole economic, political, and military superpower, the "American problem" has assumed unprecedented proportions, constantly in the news. Many have suggested that French anti-Americanism is principally a preoccupation of French elites, who, in culture, diplomacy, and politics, writes international historian David Ellwood, look "ever more beleaguered, overtaken and out-paced by the appeal of American dress-styles to their children, of fast-food to their youth, and of Hollywood to their cinema audiences." "The government, and the elites, realize that culture, writ large, is a battle that they're losing," observes Alain Franchon, an editorial writer for *Le Monde*. "They're very jealous of America's power to seduce. When faced with that you have to fight, even if you risk looking ridiculous."<sup>16</sup>

The French political class is certainly fighting. In a phrase-coining moment, Foreign Minister Hubert Vedrine recently declared that France "cannot accept a politically unipolar world, nor a culturally uniform world, nor the unilateralism of a single hyperpower." (The term has stuck; now all of Europe calls the United States "the hyperpower.") Vedrine echoed former president Mitterand's famous statement in October 1993 that no single country "should be allowed to control the images of the whole world. What is at stake is the cultural identity of our nations, the right of each people to its own culture." A few months earlier, Mitterand's minister of culture, Jack Lang, had attacked *Jurassic Park* as a threat to French national identity. More recently, Lang has argued that if France's cultural heritage is not "to dwindle into insignificance, economics and culture should learn to live together in France."

Calling for a new Ministry of External Cultural Relations, Lang wants “more energy, more openness, more international operations by French television channels and a whole-hearted build-up of a European identity ‘of imagination, youth, and spirit.’” Else, “the Old World could remain frozen in the shadow of American culture. . . .” Meanwhile, *Le Monde* routinely criticizes an America “whose commercial hegemony menaces agriculture and whose cultural hegemony insidiously ruins culinary customs, the sacred gleams of French identity.”<sup>17</sup>

In a recent, particularly acerbic essay called “*Toujours l’antiaméricanisme*: The religion of the French elite,” David Pryce-Jones states that ordinary French people on the street don’t have time for the “neo-Napoleonic” “inferiority complexes” of the French elite. “An American almost anywhere in France is virtually certain to receive a friendly greeting, and to hear praise for the latest Spielberg movie, and perhaps even for Euro-Disneyland, that genuine cultural freak.”<sup>18</sup>

But as with any ethnonationalist movement targeting a market-dominant minority, it is difficult to know the extent to which French anti-Americanism is an elite-generated phenomenon as opposed to a reflection of bottom-up popular sentiment. Certainly not all French agree with José Bové, who became something of a national hero in 1999 when he vandalized a McDonald’s and made Roquefort a global issue. After all, some 790 McDonald’s are flourishing in France, having proliferated at a rate of around eighty per year starting in the mid-1990s. On the other hand, reports Philip Gordon of the Brookings Institution, “67 percent of the French worry that globalization threatens French identity; 52 percent reject the American economic model; and 80 percent do not want to emulate the American lifestyle.” Best-sellers in France these days include *The World Is Not Merchandise*, *The Economic Horror*, and *Who Is Killing France?*<sup>19</sup>

While typically more muted, similar anti-Americanism exists in all our Western European allies—though, needless to say, each country has its own historical relationship to and distinctive set of grievances against the United States. In Germany, for example, there is an intellectual strand of anti-Americanism dating back to the poet Heinrich Heine’s scorn in the 1800s for Germans who emigrated to the Americas to get rich. More recently, Germany was furious when the United States effectively vetoed Berlin’s nominee to run the International Monetary Fund.



A general cultural fault line between America and Europe, however, bears directly on American market-dominance. François Bujon de l'Estang, French ambassador to the United States, put it this way: "What we may see emerging now is a new ideological rift. On one side is the American model of free-market capitalism, which was emulated by Margaret Thatcher's United Kingdom. On the other is a milder, European model that includes a stronger social safety net with attributes such as a national health care system and government-funded retirement and unemployment plans. Most Europeans, as well as the Canadians, are very attached to that model." Philip Gordon suggests that there is a feeling in Europe, and especially in France, "that globalization is playing to America's strengths by reinforcing the dominance of our economic model and business practices. . . ." <sup>20</sup>

Many of the European nations—among them France, Germany, and Spain—were of course once great world powers, both militarily and culturally. For these countries, being eclipsed today by America's upstart, hotdogging rise to global dominance is additionally grating. The same might be said of Great Britain. As Jonathan Freedland recently wrote in London's *Spectator* only half-facetiously, "After all, it was the Yanks who dared pushed Britain off its top perch in the first half of the last century," and then had "the impertinence to force us to give up our empire by stopping our adventure in the Suez." On the other hand, Britain has an advantage over Europe because of its linguistic, cultural, and historical links to the United States, which arguably give Britain a better shot at influencing Washington—"playing Athens to America's Rome," as Prime Minister Harold Macmillan once put it. <sup>21</sup>

In any event, far more so than in Great Britain, European anti-Americanism has translated into concrete economic and political policies that, while not exactly inimical to U.S. interests, are clearly directed at offsetting America's global power. Most crucially, the interest in a stronger, more united Europe—indeed, the European Union itself—is based in large part on the hope of making Europe competitive with, if not superior to, America as a global economic and political power. "[T]alk of European integration has increasingly gone hand in hand with anti-American rhetoric," James Kitfield noted recently. "The whole debate in Europe is now dominated by charges of U.S. 'hegemony' and 'unilateralism,'" adds an editor with *Sddeutsche Zeitung*. "Ger-

mans are rallying to the common cause of 'Euronationalism,' fueled in part by anti-American sentiment." The deputy director of a Berlin think tank agreed: "[W]e are beginning to catch the 'French disease,' which holds that you can only build greater European unity around anti-American rhetoric."<sup>22</sup>

Similarly, the euro is in part a desire to counter the global dominance of the American dollar, although only the French government has openly admitted this. European plans for a new "Euro-army"—formally, the European Rapid Reaction Force—have alarmed analysts on both sides of the Atlantic. In December 2000, then-defense secretary William Cohen warned France that a Euro-army "could, if mismanaged, render NATO a relic." More recently, a British official criticized the Rapid Reaction Force as indicative of the "virulent strain of anti-Americanism in Europe," which reflected the rivalrous "political ambitions" of "some in Europe" and was "in danger of infecting the whole transatlantic relationship."<sup>23</sup>

Nevertheless, the European nations—even France, which has been the most obstreperous—remain allies that the United States can generally count on in moments of great import. All the European nations ultimately supported the United States' war in Afghanistan. Again, it helps that these countries enjoy high standards of living and the distractions of affluence. In any case, while anti-Americanism in Europe has triggered both reactive nationalism and rising "Euronationalism," these movements, by and large, have not reflected totalizing mass hatred or confiscatory backlashes—and certainly not the desire to kill. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said of great parts of the non-Western world.

### *Anti-Americanism in the Developing World*

If America's global dominance produces resentment even among our Western allies—who have plenty of wealth and influence of their own—anti-American hostility is a thousandfold more intense in the non-Western world. Moreover, anti-Americanism outside the West has increased over the last few decades, coinciding with the United States' emergence as the world's sole superpower.

Why? As proponents of free markets correctly point out, global capitalism has, in certain important respects, done wonders for the world,

including many developing countries. Global per capita income has tripled in the last thirty-five years. Technology has transformed even small villages. Life expectancy and adult literacy rates have, on the whole, increased significantly in the developing world. Global infant mortality rates are lower than ever.

Unfortunately, these macro statistics are not what real people in the real world experience. To begin with, many "advances"—for example, the spread of the Internet and television, and even improvements in education—are two-edged swords, often producing growing discontent along with growing awareness. Globalization generates not only new opportunities and hopes, but also new social desires, stresses, insecurities, and frustrations. At the same time, the benefits of global markets have been distributed extremely unequally, both across and within countries. The spread of global markets in recent decades has unambiguously widened the gap between developed and underdeveloped countries. Today, the richest 1 percent of the world's population own as much as the poorest 57 percent. Half the world's population live on less than two dollars a day; more than a billion people live on less than one dollar a day. Meanwhile, the top 20 percent of those living in high-income countries account for 86 percent of all of the world's private consumption expenditures.<sup>24</sup>

In a newly released report, the World Bank, one of the most ardent institutional promoters of markets, notes that over two decades ending in the late 1990s some two billion people, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, and the former Soviet Union, have not benefited from globalization. To the contrary, the economies in these regions have generally contracted while poverty has risen. On a more positive note, the report notes that twenty-four developing countries increased their integration into the world economy. These countries, home to some three billion people, enjoyed an average 5 percent growth rate in per capita income. The report goes on to note, however, that even within these countries that have succeeded in breaking into global markets, integration has not, typically, led to greater income equality.<sup>25</sup>

This was not what globalization promised.

Just a decade ago, in the early 1990s, hundreds of millions of the world's poorest, from Johannesburg to Rio de Janeiro, believed that it was only a matter of time before market liberalization, democratic re-

forms, and globalization would hike their standard of living closer to that enjoyed by Americans. American policymakers and pro-market developing-country politicians were equally irresponsible in cultivating these dangerously inflated expectations. Today, as London's *Financial Times* recently put it, "Americans are richer while people in most transition economies and emerging markets still struggle, their frustration heightened by cheap, almost universal access to images and information about how much better Americans live." While anti-Americanism used to be driven by what America did, "now it is also motivated by what America is."<sup>26</sup>

And what is America? In the eyes of the vast majority of the developing world, America is the antithesis of what they are. America is rich, healthy, glamorous, confident, and exploitative—at least if Hollywood, our multinationals, our supermodels, and our leaders are any indication. America is also "almighty," able to "control the world," whether through our military power or through the IMF-implemented austerity measures we have heartlessly forced on developing populations. They, on the other hand, are hungry, poor, exploited, and powerless, often even over the destiny of their own families. Obviously their condition is not all America's fault. But like the wildly disproportionately wealthy Chinese in Indonesia, Indians in East Africa, or Jewish "oligarchs" in Russia, America is an obvious scapegoat, practically calling out to be hated.

And Americans are indeed hated in the developing world. Of course, "the poor" in developing countries are not homogeneous, and surely—hopefully—the prominent Hanoi professor who said he believed "fully 80 percent of the world's population" "privately praise[d] the September 11 attacks" was exaggerating.<sup>27</sup> Nevertheless, the fact remains that after the two towers of the World Trade Center collapsed—horrifically killing three thousand men, women, and children—many outside the United States rejoiced.

In Indonesia and Malaysia, gleeful, hate-filled youths went from one luxury hotel to another, looking for Americans. In Brazil, Osama bin Laden masks rolled off assembly lines, not fast enough to satisfy exploding consumer demand. "I don't give a shit," wrote a Chinese man in an inflammatory anti-American e-mail that circulated in Australia and Europe. "America deserves this, because of all the suffering it has caused

humankind," said a Vietnamese university student, interviewed on September 13, 2001. "The United States is king of the jungle," said another. "When the king is attacked, the other animals are happy." And: "I feel sorry for the terrorists who were very brave because they risked their lives."<sup>28</sup>

Many hundreds of millions of others in the developing world take a more moderate view, condemning the killing of innocent people but at the same time firmly declaring that "America had it coming," "This is what they get," and "What do Americans expect?" Indeed, this seems clearly to be the dominant, majority-held view in the developing world: condemnation of the attack but sympathy for the attackers and the causes motivating them.

Moreover, across Africa, Asia, and Latin America, the theme of American market dominance repeatedly emerges, with more frequency, bitterness, and clarity than the charges against American foreign policy with which they are sometimes interwoven. Thus, Daijhi, a popular Nepalese commentator, condemned the attack on America as follows:

Those men who carried out the plane bombings . . . chose specific targets. The World Trade Centre was the High Temple of capitalism. It housed thousands of highly paid financial workers who were seen as soldiers fighting an economic war that forces 80% of mankind to live in poverty. The bombers did not see them as innocent civilians. They felt these workers were directly responsible for the suffering of millions. . . . We should never rejoice in the death and suffering of other people even if they are our enemies. But America should not ignore the widespread hatred that is felt against it. No empire can successfully oppress other nations and cultures indefinitely. Unless the wealth of the whole is fairly shared among all its members there will always be rebellion and terrorism.<sup>29</sup>

And from Michel Fortin of *Africana Plus*:

The World Trade Centre was a symbol of the scandalous thirst for profit on the part of the Western countries, which practice a one-way commercial traffic. It was attacked by terrorists who wished

to humiliate the Financial Monster, the leader of the modern world. Whatever the background, this attack deserved of course the strongest condemnation. . . . Yet we have to recognize that this deplorable act of aggression may have been, at least in part, an act of revenge on the part of desperate and humiliated people, crushed by the weight of the economic oppression practiced by the peoples of the West.

It is therefore the interference of the West in the economies of the Third World which has produced the underdevelopment which it was supposed to be curing. . . . Development agencies are becoming increasingly aware that multinational companies are siphoning off the wealth of poor countries.<sup>30</sup>

These excerpts are representative of literally thousands of similar statements from inhabitants of the developing world. Much less representative is the following defense of America from the November 2001 Internet issue of *Brazzil* magazine after a slew of post-September 11 anti-American diatribes:

The reaction of Brazilians to the attack on the United States by Muslim terrorists portrays the dubious nature of [the] human mind. [The] United States is the country that the government and people of Brazil try to imitate as much as they possibly can, not to mention the ever-present long lines of Brazilians waiting to obtain their travel visas at American Embassies and Consulates all over the country.

If the people of the United States and their government are such bad people that deserve to be slaughtered as on September 11, 2001, I wonder why anybody would want to visit the country. I don't see the same long lines of Brazilians in Iraqi, Iranian, Libyan, and Saudi Arabian embassies waiting for visas to travel to those countries.

My theory regarding the reactions of Brazilians and, in fact, of people in many other third world countries is that those reactions are a mixture of envy and frustration. These are countries that have failed to move forward in economic development. Even

though Americans are always the first to arrive with help at a scene of disaster anywhere in the world, that is not what people think about when they think of the United States. They just want to live the way Americans live without realizing that Americans worked hard to get to where they are, and still work hard, and do things the right way to stay there. The dubious nature of [the] human mind makes these people feel good when the so-called mighty is brought down because they somehow irrationally believe that that would make everyone equal.<sup>31</sup>

In sum, the vicious, passionate, often self-contradictory anti-Americanism experienced by so many among the world's poor is strikingly analogous to the resentment directed against market-dominant minorities around the world. The difference is that in this case America is a *global* market-dominant minority. Like resentment against the Chinese in Southeast Asia, anti-Americanism is not always active. But it is an ever-present vein of hatred, waiting to be mined, whether by a charismatic demagogue or a triggering event.

Still, it is important to keep in mind that justifying or even praising the September 11 attack after the fact is not the same thing as participating in it. Most people, however frustrated or angry, do not kill others, however "arrogant" or resented. Indeed, until relatively recently, anti-Americanism in the developing world typically found expression not in killing Americans—although there were certainly isolated cases of anti-American violence abroad—but rather through confiscations of American businesses or property in the name of the "rightful owners of the nation." Like the expropriation of white-owned land in Zimbabwe or of Eritrean businesses in Ethiopia described in chapter 5, these confiscations are examples of a backlash against markets, targeting an "outsider" market-dominant minority.

### *Anti-market Backlash against Western Investors*

For a hundred years throughout the developing world, the market dominance of Western foreign investors has provoked the same anti-market backlashes that have been directed at domestic market-dominant

minorities. Indeed, from the viewpoint of the "indigenous" majorities, marketization and privatization campaigns in Africa, Southeast Asia, and Latin America have been virtually synonymous with "handing over to foreigners" ownership and control of the country's most valuable industries and resources, including oil, gas, timber, communications, utilities, transportation, and gold, silver, and copper mines. As American investors and corporations have become increasingly preeminent in global markets, Americans have come to bear the brunt of the reaction.

Confiscations of foreign-held property are an integral part of the history of most developing countries, often wrapped up with their most celebrated revolutionary movements. In the late 1930s, for example, Mexico's President Lázaro Cárdenas famously nationalized the country's railways, seizing control from wealthy American and British bondholders. More dramatically, decrying the "innumerable outrages [and] abuses" by foreign oil companies that pursued "private, selfish, and often illegal interests" while relegating Mexicans to "misery, drabness, and insalubrity," Cárdenas nationalized the entire oil industry. This nationalization was immensely popular at every level of society, from bishops to bartenders to university students. Hundreds of thousands of ordinary Mexicans marched through Mexico City carrying mock coffins inscribed with "Standard Oil" and the names of other fallen American behemoths.<sup>32</sup> As is always true of expropriations targeting a market-dominant minority, Cárdenas's nationalizations proved economically disastrous. Nevertheless, in Mexico to this day, Cárdenas stands for the promise of a "Mexico for the Mexicans."

In Argentina, *laissez-faire* economic policies in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries led to the humiliating domination of Argentina's economy by American companies like Swift, Armour, Wilson, Goodyear, and ITT. By 1935 roughly 50 percent of the country's industrial capital was owned or controlled by American or other Western investors. Anti-American sentiment intensified, culminating in a powerful nationalist reaction under the charismatic populist leader Juan Perón. Masterfully inciting hatred against foreign capitalists and the landed *estancieros*, Perón nationalized Argentina's foreign-owned railroads, gasworks, and utilities in the name of the "true Argentinians."<sup>33</sup>

Similar majority-supported, anti-market confiscations targeting



Western foreign investors, often along with internal market-dominant minorities, have occurred throughout the developing world. In Chile in the early 1970s, democratically elected president Salvador Allende nationalized hundreds of private businesses, including the American Anaconda and Kennecott copper companies, in the name of "Chile for the Chileans." In Uruguay, Don José Batlle y Ordóñez swept to electoral victory on an antforeigner, nationalist platform; once in office Batlle nationalized the foreign-dominated railway, electricity, and insurance industries. In Burma, the country's revered first prime minister U Nu nationalized major British teak, cement, sugar, and transportation companies along with Burmese Indian and Burmese Chinese businesses in the name of "Burmanization." In Indonesia, Sukarno's sweeping nationalizations in the late fifties and sixties targeted not just Indonesian Chinese but also enormous Dutch enterprises. In Uganda in the 1960s, President Milton Obote partially nationalized major European companies, including Shell-BP. Around the same time in Tanzania, President Julius Nyerere nationalized all major foreign firms, including the entirety of the British- and Indian-dominated banking, insurance, and import-export sectors.<sup>34</sup>

The list goes on. A startling percentage of the world's developing countries have at some point confiscated the assets or businesses of market-dominant foreign investors. Invariably, these nationalizations were majority-supported—usually with wild popular enthusiasm.

With the fall of the Soviet Union in 1989, many imagined that the pressures for nationalization in the developing world would evaporate. But as discussed earlier, this prediction was based on the erroneous assumption that nationalization in the developing world was motivated principally by socialist or Communist ideals. In reality, with a few exceptions (China, Cuba, Vietnam), nationalization in developing countries was never so much an expression of socialism as it was of intense nationalism and ethnonationalism, directed at both Western and internal market-dominant minorities.

The events of 1989, while perhaps discrediting socialism, did nothing to diminish nationalist and ethnonationalist pressures. Indeed, as chapter 5 discussed, ethnonationalist confiscations targeting market-dominant minorities have occurred frequently since 1989, for example,

in Ethiopia, Indonesia, and most recently Zimbabwe. At the same time, nationalist resentment against Western "economic aggression" and IMF free market "austerity" measures has intensified. In recent years, with the rising dominance of the United States and the growing visibility of American multinationals, such nationalist resentment increasingly vents itself in concentrated anti-American hatred.

But unlike in the 1930s or even 1970s, anti-American backlash these days rarely takes the form of confiscation or nationalization of American holdings. This is not because nationalism or anti-Americanism has lessened. (When President Bill Clinton visited India in 2000, furious protests broke out, and well-known poet Kaifi Azmi wrote a poem for Clinton, saying: "Your bill is counterfeit. O shark of the markets / We know you truly well. O benevolent / intruder from the distant land.")<sup>35</sup> Rather, anti-American nationalizations are rare because of America's tremendous global clout—economic, political, and military. Any country daring to expropriate American property today risks serious consequences, whether in the form of capital flight, crippling lawsuits, economic sanctions, or worse. The poor countries of the world, governments and citizens alike, fear America. That's partly why they hate us.

Indeed, the few episodes of near-confiscation in recent years have typically involved unusual circumstances and some degree of American botch-up. In 1999, for example, the Wall Street firm Kohlberg Kravis Roberts (KKR) engineered the hostile takeover of Russia's Lomonosov Porcelain Factory by American shareholders. But KKR underestimated the importance of the factory as a symbol of Russian cultural identity. Established by Peter the Great's daughter in 1744, the Lomonosov Factory produced tea sets, gilded figurines, and even porcelain paintings for generations of tsars. After the Communists took over in 1917, the factory's product line "became more politically correct: plates bearing Lenin's visage and chess sets with manacled proletarians as pawns." Apparently, Jane Fonda once ordered Lomonosov china, painted environmental green with the rust-colored slogan "Earth to the Workers."<sup>36</sup>

For many Russians the idea of foreigners, especially Americans, owning the factory was anathema, or, as one factory spokeswoman put it, akin to "selling part of the Hermitage art collection." Nor did it help matters that KKR had employed a shady local intermediary to carry out

the actual transaction. In any event, self-interested managers of the factory sued for renationalization, on grounds that it had been illegally privatized—singling it out of ten thousand other similar privatizations. In the end, however, after initial losses in lower St. Petersburg courts, the American investors ultimately prevailed.<sup>37</sup>

Enron, much in the news these days, fared considerably worse in India. As late as 1991, India's power sector was a state-owned economic nightmare. Almost half of the electricity produced in the country was given away free, and roughly another quarter was stolen. Meanwhile, India's economy was plodding along at almost zero growth. Pushed by the World Bank, India's new pro-market government came up with a familiar solution: jump-start the power sector through privatization and foreign investment.

In 1993, in what seemed like a match made in heaven, Enron entered into a contract with the state government of Maharashtra to build the \$2.8 billion Dabhol power plant, representing by far India's largest foreign investment. But like Coca-Cola and IBM, who were "persuaded" by Indira Gandhi in the 1970s to close down their operations in India, Enron ran into intense anti-American, antimultinational sentiment. Shortly after the deal was signed, Hindu nationalist parties rode to power in elections in Maharashtra. The new leaders condemned the terms of the contract as theft and "neo-colonialism," favorable only to Enron and its corrupt local cronies while forcing the already impoverished local Maharashtrians to pay higher, survival-threatening prices.

"Why do we need foreigners when we have so many Indian industrialists?" demanded the new leaders as they "reviewed the legitimacy" of the contract. "Kill the Dabhol project!" "America out!" and "Enron into the sea!" became popular slogans. In what many Westerners view as a form of confiscation, Enron eventually had to renegotiate the terms of the contract.<sup>38</sup> (Critics of Enron say its willingness to renegotiate merely confirms how outrageous their original profit margin must have been; Enron's defenders argue that Enron, having already sunk \$300 million in construction costs, was basically held up and extorted.)

Enron's troubles in India were far from over. Even after the new contract was signed in 1995, with reduced electricity rates for the Maharashtrians, Enron stood as a hated symbol of American exploita-

tion. Anti-Enron demonstrations, vandalism, and threats to storm the power plant persisted through spring of 2001. Enron ended up paying for local police to provide additional security, then got entangled in further scandal when New York-based Human Rights Watch issued a 166-page report charging the police with beating and illegally detaining anti-Enron protesters. At one point, the report said, "the pregnant wife of a village activist was dragged naked from her home and beaten in the street."<sup>39</sup>

But the Lomonosov Porcelain and Enron cases are exceptional. The truth is that while American multinationals are more resented than ever, and often the subject of sporadic local protest or retaliation, they are also more confident and powerful in the developing world than ever, backed by the strongest nation in the world. In India, for example, despite the Enron fiasco and seething popular antimultinational hostility, recent economic liberalizations have brought American giants like Coca-Cola and IBM charging back in. Because of the United States' "hyperpower" status, developing-country governments—at least for now—no longer view expropriation of American assets as a viable option. As one developing-country commentator put it, "Developing countries are entirely dependent on, and controlled by, the international financial system. In short, we are at the mercy of the United States."

Thus, even as anti-American hostility in developing countries mounts, one outlet for its expression—expropriation of American holdings—has essentially been closed off. On one level this is a cause for celebration: Perhaps what Westerners call "the rule of law"—meaning basically the sanctity of contract and protection of private property—is finally taking hold in the developing world. The problem, however, is that the pervasive, underlying hatred of the market-dominant minority remains. And there are outlets for group hatred infinitely more terrible than economic confiscations.

### *Destroying America*

Market-dominant minorities are often the victims of homicidal fury. The Chinese in Southeast Asia, Tutsi in Rwanda, Jews in Germany, Ibo in Nigeria, and Croats in the former Yugoslavia were all, at some point,

murdered en masse by enraged members of a frustrated, relatively impoverished majority who saw themselves as the humiliated "true" owners of the nation.

The September 11, 2001, killings had much in common with other mass killings of market-dominant minorities. First, they revealed an all-consuming group hatred that may have shocked Americans but is distinctly parallel to the hatred felt, for example, by the Hutu when they murdered Tutsis, who had dominated them economically and politically for four hundred years. In the eyes of the killers on September 11, as in every case when market-dominant minorities are massacred, the victims were no longer individuals but faceless embodiments of corrupt wealth, arrogance, and abusive power.

Second, this intense group hatred was fomented by a calculating, charismatic demagogue. In this respect, Osama bin Laden has his counterparts in Adolf Hitler and Slobodan Milosevic. In all these cases the leaders found great wells of anger, disgust, and spiritual misery waiting to be exploited.

Third, like other mass killings aimed at "cleansing" the nation of a hated "outsider" market-dominant minority, one of the main objectives of Islamic terrorism has been to eliminate the presence of America from the Middle East. A stunning feature of this terrorism is its global reach. Nevertheless, one of bin Laden's primary missions has been to "purge" the "lands of Islam" of Western and particularly American infidels. "For more than seven years," bin Laden declared in 1993, "the United States has been occupying the lands of Islam in the holiest of its territories, Arabia, plundering its riches, overwhelming its rulers, humiliating its people, threatening its neighbors, and using its peninsula as a spearhead to fight neighboring Islamic peoples."<sup>40</sup>

Similarly, after the 1996 twin bombings of U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania—in which over 250 people died and more than 5,500 were injured—bin Laden's associate Abdul-Bari Atwan published an article called "American Harvest of Blood," defending the suicide attacks as "the logical results of the unjust and demeaning policies which the United States has been pursuing in the Arab region and in the Islamic world." A litany of grievances followed, summarized by Yossef Bodansky in his recent biography of bin Laden, with the main criticism aimed at

the United States' policy of sponsoring corrupt dictators in the Arab world, hypocritically "prevent[ing] the democratic tide from spreading to the region . . ." According to Atwan, "America's insistence on imposing its own puppets on the Muslim world in order to expedite exploitation of oil and other riches—and not U.S.-Israeli relations—was at the core of the Islamist eruption."<sup>41</sup>

After the September 11 attacks, bin Laden himself issued a strongly worded warning to Americans in a recorded statement broadcast on Al-Jazeera television. Describing the American victims generically as "killers, who have abused the blood, honour, and sanctuaries of Muslims," bin Laden swore "by God, who has elevated the skies without pillars," that "neither America nor the people who live in it will dream of security before we live it in Palestine, and not before all the infidel armies leave the land of Muhammad."<sup>42</sup>

Fourth, like all acts of violence against market-dominant minorities, the September 11 attacks were an act of revenge by the weak against the powerful, motivated by tremendous feelings of humiliation and inferiority. "Weakness" is a complicated matter, with a large subjective component. Poverty breeds feelings of weakness. But so does being from a poor country. As many have pointed out, the pilots who flew their planes into the World Trade Center were well educated, with middle-class backgrounds. But they were also from countries that in their own eyes had been raped and humiliated by the West. Slobodan Milosevic was not poverty-stricken, but his statement "[I]f we don't know how to work well or to do business, at least we know how to fight well!"<sup>43</sup> reveals much about the psychology of a majority that perceives itself as dominated and degraded.

"Power" can also be subjective and complicated—but in the United States' case, it is not. As a country, America is not merely disproportionately wealthy, but economically, politically, culturally, technologically, and militarily dominant over the rest of the world.

"America is the most powerful nation on Earth," wrote Nepalese columnist Daijhi, shortly after September 11. "Its economic force controls every field of commerce. Its military strength can destroy any other nation. It is effectively both the global government and the global policeman. But a small group of dedicated people armed only with fruit knives and a passionate cause was able to bring death, destruction and

humiliation upon it. The spectacular attack on New York and Washington was the most important international event since the collapse of Communist Russia.<sup>44</sup> Although Daijhi condemned the attack on America, the hint of pride in his tone is unmistakable. "So America is not so invincible after all," hundreds of other developing-country commentators observed.

Many on the Arab street gloated more expressly. "Bulls-eye!" cheered taxi drivers in Egypt as they watched over and over footage of the hijacked planes slamming into the twin towers of the World Trade Center. "*Mabrouk! Mabrouk!* (Congratulations!)," shouted jubilant crowds huddled around televisions in shop windows.<sup>45</sup> While most Muslims are not fundamentalists, the September 11 killings nevertheless prompted many of them to celebrate and give special thanks to Allah. "[T]here can be no question," writes Martin Peretz, "that today, it is in the lands of Islam where the greatest number of lives are invigorated by ecstatic hatred of the United States. We see this ecstasy, at once joyful and enraged, from Gaza to Egypt to the Gulf to South Asia."<sup>46</sup>

Demographics exacerbate the problem. The majority of the population in the Middle East are young. "Seventy percent of the Arab population has been born since 1970," Robert Kaplan warned presciently in his 1994 essay "The Coming Anarchy." "The most distant recollection of these youths will be the West's humiliation of colonially invented Iraq in 1991. Today seventeen out of twenty-two Arab states have a declining gross national product; in the next twenty years, at current growth rates, the population of many Arab countries will double. These states . . . will be ungovernable through conventional secular ideologies."<sup>47</sup>

The statement bin Laden aired shortly after the September 11 attacks, nauseating to grief-stricken Americans, hit just the right chord with millions throughout the Middle East: "I bear witness that there is no God but Allah and that Mohammed is his messenger. There is America, hit by God in one of its softest spots. Its greatest buildings were destroyed. Thank God for that. There is America, full of fear from its north to its south, from its west to its east. Thank God for that. What America is tasting now is something insignificant compared to what we have tasted for scores of years."<sup>48</sup>

The momentary jubilation, however, of the millions of poor and ex-

ploited people around the world who rejoiced at the mass murder of Americans reflects profound weakness. In the words of Turkish writer Orhan Pamuk, "It is neither Islam nor even poverty itself that directly engenders support for terrorists whose ferocity and ingenuity are unprecedented in human history; it is, rather, the crushing humiliation that has infected the third-world countries." Pamuk continues as follows:

At no time in history has the gulf between rich and poor been so wide. . . . at no time in history have the lives of the rich been so forcefully brought to the attention of the poor through television and Hollywood films. . . . But far worse, at no other time have the world's rich and powerful societies been so clearly right, and "reasonable."

Today an ordinary citizen of a poor, undemocratic Muslim country, or a civil servant in a third-world country or in a former socialist republic struggling to make ends meet, is aware of how insubstantial is his share of the world's wealth; he knows that he lives under conditions that are much harsher and more devastating than those of a "Westerner" and that he is condemned to a much shorter life. At the same time, however, he senses in a corner of his mind that his poverty is to some considerable degree the fault of his own folly and inadequacy, or those of his father and grandfather. The Western world is scarcely aware of this overwhelming feeling of humiliation that is experienced by most of the world's population . . .<sup>49</sup>

Like other group hatred movements directed against market-dominant minorities, Islamic fundamentalism offers an alternative to humiliation. It offers a scapegoat, a mission, an identity, and a chance—however deluded—for the powerless to regain power.



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12. Limor Nakar, "Peace slow, but Israeli economy on fast track," *Chicago Sun-Times*, January 27, 2001, p. 16.
13. These statistics are from Michael Wolffsohn, *Israel: Polity, Society, Economy, 1882–1986*, Douglas Bokovoy, trans. (New Jersey: Humanities Press International, 1987), especially pp. 268–69.
14. See, for example, David Remnick, "In a Dark Time," *The New Yorker*, p. 51.
15. Van den Berghe, *The Ethnic Phenomenon*, p. 232.
16. As reported in Lewis, *Semites and Anti-Semites*, p. 229.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 269.
18. This is from an interview with Fouad Ajami, professor of Middle East Studies at Johns Hopkins University, by Neal Conan on NPR's *Talk of the Nation*, broadcast November 13, 2001.
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22. *Ibid.*

### Chapter 11

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2. Thomas L. Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* (New York: Anchor Books, 2000), pp. xix, 13, 381–82.
3. Mortimer B. Zuckerman, "Still the American century," *U.S. News & World Report*, February 10, 1997, p. 72.
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## Chapter 12

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