

## *Preface*

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The ruins of the World Trade Center towers and the Pentagon were still smoldering from the September 11 terrorist attacks when many stunned Americans joined President Bush in wondering, as he did in his speech to Congress nine days later, “Why do they hate us?” What could have caused nineteen mostly well-educated men from longtime ally Saudi Arabia to plan and execute the deadliest attacks on American soil since the Japanese strike against the U.S. Navy at Pearl Harbor almost exactly six decades earlier?

The initial reaction to the 9/11 attacks in much of the world was sympathy and support for America and the more than three thousand victims who died that day. To be sure, a few rejoiced that an arrogant Uncle Sam was finally getting a long overdue comeuppance, and a much smaller number espoused conspiracy theories that the attacks were an “inside job,” perpetrated by the Central Intelligence Agency or Israel’s Mossad intelligence service—or both. Yet even the leaders of countries with which the United States has had less than cordial relations were quick to express their condolences. The most impressive display of support came from NATO allies that, despite Washington’s preference for acting alone in Afghanistan, provided material and other assistance for the invasion, and in most cases they did so with strong support from their publics. Help was not limited to NATO members, as some of the republics of the former Soviet Union also contributed with intelligence, basing rights, and overflight rights.

In many countries, the final quarter of 2001 represented the high-water mark for favorable opinions of America and its policies. A series of important events and actions by the United States highlighted the months and years that followed: President Bush’s State of the Union message that identified Iraq, Iran, and North Korea as an “axis of evil”; the 2002 National Security Strategy, predicated on the proposition that deterrence and containment, the foundations of Cold War defense policies, were no longer adequate bases for ensuring the country’s safety; the long run-up to and subsequent invasion of Iraq in the face of widespread opposition within NATO and with the support of only a handful of allies in “the coalition of the willing”; undeniable photographic evidence that Iraqi prisoners were mistreated at Abu Ghraib prison, along with less-well-

documented charges of similar misconduct at the Guantanamo prison; the reelection of President Bush in 2004; three successful elections that led to a democratic constitution and an elected government in Baghdad; the capture, trial, and execution of Saddam Hussein and two of his colleagues; and an increasingly bloody insurgency that threatens to engulf Iraq in a full-fledged civil war. These and other important events provided the American people as well as publics abroad ample material for judging this country and its policies.

There is a vast literature on how America is viewed abroad, ranging from Alexis de Tocqueville's classic nineteenth-century study *Democracy in America* to recent editorials supporting or criticizing the United States and its policies. This book has a more limited goal, focusing largely on the post-9/11 years and attempting to understand how publics abroad view America; its people, values, and institutions; and Washington's foreign policies. Do they judge this country primarily because of what it *is*, or are their views mostly based on what it *does*? The obvious answer is that both judgments are important, and the chapters that follow present a wealth of international survey data on opinions about both American society and its conduct in world affairs.

If the goal is to understand substantial changes about how America is viewed by publics abroad over such a short period of time as the years since the 9/11 attacks, the underlying hypothesis is that actions are likely to be more significant. The qualities that constitute what America *is*—modern, capitalistic, wealthy, powerful, democratic, nationalistic, religious, materialistic, innovative, optimistic, sports loving, and many others that characterize this country today—were also prominent features of the country during the decade prior to the 9/11 attacks, and thus they probably cannot fully explain significant changes in how others see us. What America *does*, on the other hand, may have a powerful impact, even in the short run.

That thesis, if valid, contains an optimistic message for the future. Without overlooking the existence of deeply committed “America haters” whose views are cast in concrete, it suggests that the United States has within its powers the ability to influence how most others will see us. Foreign policies that are wise, generous, and reflect a thoughtful long-term vision for a more secure world are likely to be judged accordingly—certainly not by all because some will always hate America for whatever it does, or fails to do, but by enough to make a significant difference. Perhaps Winston Churchill was engaging in hyperbole when he described the Marshall Plan as “the most unsordid act in history,” but even if he was, it stands as one of the great triumphs of twentieth-century

American foreign policy. It certainly demonstrated that the term “enlightened self-interest” is not an oxymoron.

In undertaking this book, I have been the fortunate beneficiary of the talents, kindness, and insights of many individuals and organizations. The Carnegie Corporation provided Duke University with a grant to study constraints on the uses of force in the twenty-first century. My colleagues Peter Feaver and Bruce Jentleson, principal investigators, urged me to undertake this study, and they provided some useful comments along the way, as did Bob Keohane, now a member of the faculty at Princeton University. Kal Holsti and Bruce Kuniholm provided useful suggestions on the Canada and Turkey mini-care studies. The Duke Arts and Science Research Council provided a small grant in 2006 to fund undergraduate research assistants for the year following the expiration of the Carnegie grant. Natasha Roetter, Elizabeth Kelly, Erika Seeler, Mark Dubois, and Caleb Seeley were model research assistants, especially in finding materials for the mini-case studies in chapter 4.

Papers for two American Political Science Association annual meetings and lectures at Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government and the Tecnológico de Monterrey in Mexico City provided an opportunity to present some preliminary results and to get useful comments and suggestions; those from my long-time friend Richard Sobel of Harvard University were especially helpful.

Even a casual reader of the tables in chapters 2 and 3 will note the importance of data from the Pew Global Attitudes Project and the Program on International Policy Attitudes. The surveys conducted in recent years by Andrew Kohut and Steve Kull, directors of the Pew and PIPA projects, have greatly enriched our understanding of international public opinion.

Since August 2000 I have had the great good fortune to work with Anne Marie Boyd on this and several other projects. Her title, “research secretary,” does not begin to do full justice to her many contributions. Whether searching the Internet for obscure sources, formatting tables, identifying poorly worded sentences in draft chapters, or helping to prepare the index, she does it all with skill, dedication, and good humor. She is also an exceptionally pleasant person with whom it has always been a pleasure to work.

This is my second book project with Jim Reische, political science editor at the University of Michigan Press. His unfailing help, support, and patience have been exemplary. Sarah Remington, acquisitions editorial assistant at the Press, and Kevin Rennells were also immensely helpful in the process of transforming a manuscript into a book. Betsy Hovey provided excellent copyediting.

All of the above have my heartfelt thanks, and they are absolved from the remaining weaknesses and errors.

Last but not least, I dedicate this book to my wonderful family—daughter Maija, her husband Brad, and their delightful sons Aksel and Mikko. One of my fondest hopes is they will someday see an America that ranks not only among the wealthiest and most powerful countries but also among the most highly respected among publics abroad.

Ole R. Holsti