

FOREIGN POLICY & DEFENSE

The World vs. America

“The Anti-American Century?” by Ivan Krastev, in *Journal of Democracy* (April 2004), 1101 15th St., N.W., Ste. 800, Washington, D.C. 20005.

The anti-Americanism now so much in vogue around the globe is not simply a response to the Bush administration or the war in Iraq, and it's not a passing phenomenon either, says Krastev, chairman of the board of the Centre for Liberal Strategies, in Sofia, Bulgaria. It has various sources, comes in different guises, and has arisen in an age when democracy and capitalism are without powerful ideological rivals. Anti-Americanism has become a conveniently empty vessel into which can be poured all sorts of anxieties and discontents. “People are against America because they are against everything—or because they do not know exactly what they are against.”

To Islamic fundamentalists, America embodies a hateful modernity; to Europeans, America, still clinging to religious faith and capital punishment, is not modern enough. In the Middle East, America is accused of hostility to Islam; in the Balkans, of being pro-Islamic. “The United States is blamed both for globalizing the world and for ‘unilaterally’ resisting globalization.”

What's new is not anti-Americanism as such, but the fact that “blaming America has become politically correct behavior even among America's closest allies.” The French pattern of anti-Americanism, expressed by

elites in search of legitimacy and the young in search of a cause, has become common throughout Western Europe. There, the elites challenge America as a way to buy public support for making the welfare state more market oriented—better able to compete with America.

In Eastern Europe, however, the reformist elites have sided with the United States, because blaming America only strengthens the local anti-democratic opposition, foes of capitalism. “Lacking any positive vision for an alternative future,” they see anti-Americanism as a way to attract protest votes from the disenchanted.

The U.S. response to anti-Americanism has been aggressive promotion of democracy, though in return for their support in the global “war on terrorism,” the United States reserves comment when certain less than fully democratic regimes brand their domestic opponents “terrorists.” That may possibly undermine democratic movements in some countries. But in many places, those who favor democracy and capitalism have opposed the rise of anti-Americanism. Perhaps America's best strategy for countering anti-Americanism in the world lies less in trying to export democracy than in bolstering its homegrown proponents.

Dealing with Devils

“Trials and Errors: Principle and Pragmatism in Strategies of International Justice” by Jack Snyder and Leslie Vinjamuri, in *International Security* (Winter 2003–04), Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard Univ., 79 John F. Kennedy St., Cambridge, Mass. 02138.

When the goal is to prevent war crimes, genocide, and political killings, how much should principle yield to pragmatism? Political scientists Snyder, of Columbia University, and Vinjamuri, of Georgetown University, argue that human rights advocacy groups may do more harm than good in the long run by insisting on the application of universal standards to the prosecution of in-

dividuals responsible for atrocities: “Preventing atrocities and enhancing respect for the law will frequently depend on striking politically expedient bargains that create effective political coalitions to contain the power of potential perpetrators of abuses.” In other words, deals must sometimes be struck with devils—by providing amnesty, say, for past abuses, or even by ignoring them. For

example, in September 2002, to avoid undermining progress toward peace and stability in Afghanistan, United Nations administrator Lakhdar Brahimi resisted calls from outgoing human rights commissioner Mary Robinson to investigate alleged war crimes by key figures in the new UN-backed government there.

The first order of business in countries where atrocities occur—and where those who committed abuses may remain powerful—should be to establish, through bargaining and negotiation, the fundamental political and institutional conditions that will make justice possible. Absent those conditions, attempts to implement universal standards of criminal justice may actually weaken norms of justice by revealing their ineffectiveness.

Snyder and Vinjamuri examined 32 civil wars fought since 1989. Of the nine instances in which “human rights abuses were reduced, peace was secured, and the degree

of democracy was substantially improved,” only three—East Timor, the former Yugoslavia (except Macedonia), and Peru—involving trials for individuals accused of atrocities. In general, say the authors, trials helped to end abuses only where local criminal justice institutions were already fairly well established. Like tribunals, amnesties “require effective political backing and strong institutions to enforce their terms.” And truth commissions, another favorite instrument of human rights advocates, “have been useful mainly” when, as in South Africa, they have made amnesties politically acceptable.

In Iraq today, a trial of the captured dictator Saddam Hussein appears to be in the works. But, the authors warn, extensive use of war crimes trials there, “in the midst of ongoing instability and powerful potential spoilers, as well as in the face of efforts to rebuild the basic institutions of the state,” would be an ill advised move.

Neodivide

“The Neoconservative Moment” by Francis Fukuyama, in *The National Interest* (Summer 2004), 1615 L St., N.W., Ste. 1230, Washington, D.C. 20036.

Neoconservatives have come under intense criticism for their role (real and imagined) in taking the United States to war in Iraq. Now, one of their own, writing in the premier neocon foreign-policy journal, joins the critics. Fukuyama, author most recently of *State-Building* (2004), attacks the “emblematic” neoconservative strategic thinking of columnist Charles Krauthammer as “fatally flawed.”

As early as 1990, Krauthammer began propounding a doctrine of American “unipolarity” in the post-Cold War world as an alternative to the ideas of isolationist, realist, and liberal-internationalist thinkers. Fukuyama contends that he and other conservatives (“neo” and otherwise) around *The National Interest* tried to build another sort of approach based on the same critiques, but it was Krauthammer’s thinking that prevailed in the upper echelons of the George W. Bush administration.

Fukuyama says that the lack of reality in

Krauthammer’s doctrine was evident in a speech he gave this past February championing democratic globalism, which Fukuyama describes as “a kind of muscular Wilsonianism—minus international institutions.” While defining U.S. interests so narrowly “as to make the neoconservative position indistinguishable from realism,” as advocated by Henry Kissinger and others, Krauthammer’s strategy is “utterly unrealistic in its overestimation of U.S. power and our ability to control events around the world.” (Making “not the slightest nod” to such setbacks as the failure to find weapons of mass destruction, Krauthammer spoke as if the Iraq War were “an unqualified success.”)

In Krauthammer’s view, the United States should commit “blood and treasure” to democratic nation-building only in “places central to the larger war against the existential enemy.” But neither Iraq nor Al Qaeda ever threatened the existence of the United States, says Fukuyama. Strangest of all, he