

World

U.S. tsunami aid pushes up U.S. image, while Iraq pulls it down, poll finds

By Susan Page
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON — The outpouring of aid for tsunami victims in Asia and President Bush's push for democracy in the Middle East have helped abate anti-Americanism around the world, a survey of public opinion in 16 nations found.

Those gains have been largely offset, however, by opposition to the Iraq war and antagonism toward Bush personally, according to a study released Thursday by the non-partisan Pew Research Center. Views of the United States remain dismal in the five predominantly Muslim countries surveyed and negative in much of Europe.

In every nation surveyed except the United States, a majority said the world would be better off if a country or coalition of countries emerged as a military superpower equal to America.

"Anti-Americanism is entrenched," project director Andrew Kohut says. The Iraq war has crystallized that resentment, he says. "Among our allies, it's (seen as) an expression of American unilateralism ... and for the Muslim world, it's evidence of America taking



By Scott Barbour, Getty Images

Not Bush fans: Anti-war protesters in London target President Bush in October. Most Britons said his re-election lowered their view of the USA.

charge in the Mideast in a way that's very unpopular there." The findings by the Pew Global Attitudes Project — the most ambitious attempt anywhere to measure international public opinion — are based on nearly 17,000 interviews in 16 nations in late April and May. The margins of error for each country's survey range from +/-2 to +/-4 percentage points.

For the United States, the survey shows a world in which some old friends are estranged and surprising new friends are emerging. Atti-

able rating came from India: 71%. The lowest was from Jordan: 21%. There were some encouraging trends for the United States:

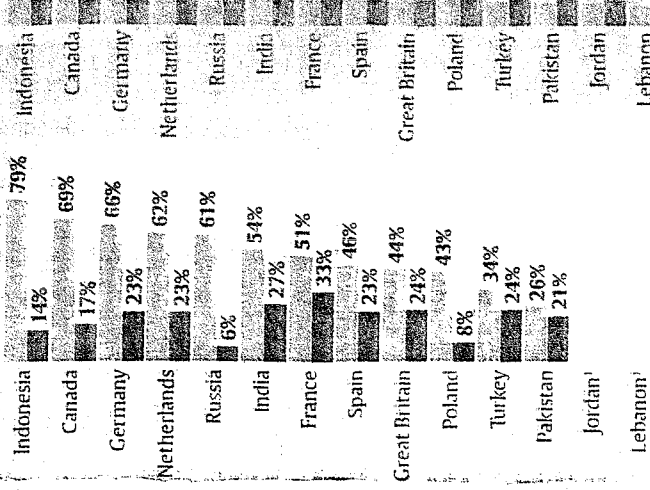
- Millions of dollars from Americans for tsunami victims created goodwill worldwide. In Indonesia, where the relief effort was focused, nearly eight in 10 said the donations had given them a more favorable view of the United States. Just 15% there viewed this nation unfavorably in 2003; now 38% do.

- Bush's push for democracy in the Middle East has fueled optimism in Lebanon and Indonesia that prospects for representative government in that region are improving. Even in places where the United States is rated poorly — Jordan, Pakistan and Lebanon — nearly half or more of those optimistic about democracy's prospects gave some credit to U.S. policies.

But enmity toward Bush was strong. In every foreign country except Poland, people said his re-election gave them a less favorable view of the United States.

Widespread opposition to the war in Iraq continues as well. Among those nations that joined the U.S.-led coalition, only people in the Netherlands said their govern-

Global attitudes shift with U.S. actions
More favorable U.S. tsunami relief effort Boosted image: Re-election of Bush weakens



Response not available
Source: Pew Research Center

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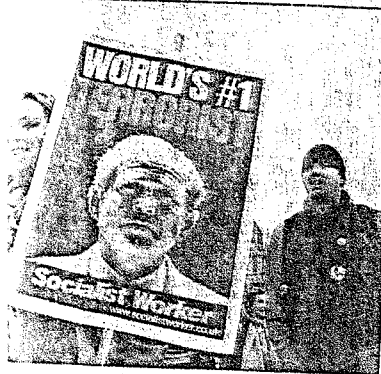
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U.S. image, down, poll finds



By Scott Barbour, Getty Images

in London target President Bush in action lowered their view of the USA.

itudes toward the United States improved significantly in Russia and Indonesia. They remain positive in Poland.

But in most of Europe, China — a country that lacks democratic elections or personal freedoms — had a better image than the United States. Positive attitudes toward the United States fell in Canada and Great Britain. In Pakistan and Turkey, key allies in the war on terrorism, fewer than one in four viewed the United States favorably.

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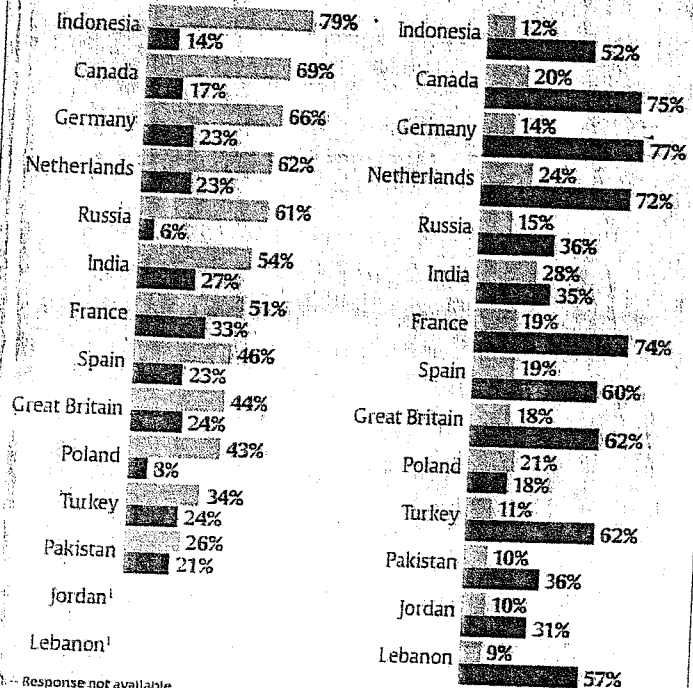
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More favorable Less favorable

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Re-election of President Bush weakened it:



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By Julie Salder, USA TODAY

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Saddam Hussein had made the world safer. In most of them — Canada, most of Europe, China and all the predominantly Muslim nations — a majority said it had made the world more dangerous.

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