

Long-held European Anti-American Sentiment is Growing and is Threatening to Undermine U.S. Global Influence

The following excerpts are reproduced from a recent Brussels Business Journal editorial (10/18/05). It discusses how Europe's inability to come to terms with the social, political and economic failure of its "postmodern, post-Westphalian, post-nation [welfare]-state" model of governance, which, since the fall of the Berlin wall, has been promoted as **the** model for future global supranational governance at the United Nations, has given rise to virulent anti-Americanism.

Paul Belien, "Does Condi Realize the Danger of Europe's Anti-Americanism?"
<http://www.brusselsjournal.com/node/367#comment-640>

"The inaugural issue of the new American quarterly *The American Interest* (Autumn 2005) includes [an interview](#) with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. In the course of the conversation AI editor Adam Garfinkle asks Rice a question on anti-Americanism:

During the Cold War we were all familiar with varieties of anti-Americanism, mostly on the Left. A lot of people now claim that not only is there more anti-Americanism, but that its sources are more diverse. Do you think that's so and if you do, where does this new anti-Americanism come from? Is it just a reaction to American conduct after the 9/11 attacks or is it because we're No. 1 and there's a natural envy? What do you think accounts for it?

It is a very pertinent question and it goes to the roots of one of the major problems confronting Europe but also America today, with not only political but also [economic consequences](#). Is there more anti-Americanism today than before? Are its sources more diverse? Where does the new anti-Americanism come from? Is it a reaction to America's reaction to 9/11? Or is it envy? What does the leading American foreign policy maker think? These were the things Garfinkle asked, but, unfortunately, Rice did not answer.

...My impression is that anti-Americanism is more widespread in Western Europe now than it has ever [been before](#). If so, there must be a reason for it. I have argued that I do not think it has to do with the Iraq war, because the Western Europeans heap as much scorn on the American conservatives who oppose the war as on the so-called neo-conservatives.

...Well, then, is it simply, as Garfinkle asked Secretary of State Rice, "because [America is] No. 1 and there's a natural envy?" Anti-Americanism as the equally irrational, deeply psychological envy that Freud said women feel towards men: a kind of Transatlantic "penis envy" that Europeans, who are said to come from Venus, feel for Americans, who are said to come from Mars? And could this, perhaps, be the subconscious reason why Rice evades the question?

Envy of those who are richer, or rather the egalitarian impulse to cut everyone down to the same level, is the driving force behind the West European welfare model. Since America is not only stronger than Europe, but also richer, this might go some way to explaining Europe's attitude towards America. It does not explain, however, why anti-Americanism is growing, unless America is growing rapidly richer than Western Europe or the egalitarian impulses in Europe are rapidly increasing. A better psychological explanation for the growth of anti-Americanism might be anger rather than envy.

... In the latest issue of *The National Interest* (Fall 2005) – not to be confused with *The American Interest* mentioned above – John Hulsman and William Schirano write that “the European Union is dead.” ... “There is little doubt, following the twin ‘no’ votes in France and the Netherlands, that **the European Union, long proudly proclaimed as the future model of international relations**, is dead,” say Hulsman and Schirano. “So, to understand what is happening here, we must think unconventionally about the end of the dream of ever closer union – about death and the process of coming to terms with it.

... Hulsman and Schirano argue that **the European elites, after the initial stage of denial that their attempt to create the “postmodern, post-Westphalian, post-nation-state” has proved impossible, are now in the second stage described by Kübler-Ross: the state of “anger, rage, envy and resentment”** – a state which “usually begins innocently, with a thought such as ‘why me, why not him or her?’” The authors do not draw the parallel between this psychological state and Transatlantic relations, but apply the analysis to the relations between the European elite and the European people, where angry politicians such as the former head of the rotating EU presidency, Prime Minister Jean-Claude Juncker of Luxembourg, **told voters** that “the countries that have said ‘no’ [to the European Constitution] will have to ask themselves the question again.” Jacques Chirac, too, they write, “behaved exactly as Kübler-Ross would have predicted.” The leaders are angry with the people because “the cozy corporatist economics in the face of globalization or political elitism instead of broad-based support for Europe, can no longer be sustained.”

I believe the psychological model is more appropriately applied not just to the European federalist project but to the general plight of Europe as a whole, namely the fact that it is a dying continent in the most literal sense, as its demographic rates indicate. This issue (among others) is explicitly raised by Conrad Black in **an article** entitled “Europe’s Dream Disturbed,” in the same issue of *The National Interest*. Black sees **the European Union not only as an attempt “to be emancipated from the straitjacket of national identity” but also as an attempt to “[impose] Euro-Socialism” and “casting off the soft hegemony of the United States.”**

That Europe is dying can be seen in its “collapsed birthrate” – “it is ultimately unnatural for people not to reproduce themselves,” says Black – but also in “stagnant economic growth in France and Germany, double-digit unemployment, impending pension crises, and demographic levels sustained by relatively unassimilable immigration from Islamic countries.” One can easily see that, as this situation worsens, anti-American feelings are likely to grow because the “Why me, why not him” feelings will be directed towards the US. **Indeed, in the perception of many egalitarian Europeans it is a gross injustice that the economy of the “social” European model is collapsing while that of the capitalist American model keeps growing.**

And yet, there is also a foreign policy reason for why anti-Americanism has grown even deeper than it was twenty years ago at the height of the Transatlantic debate over the deployment of American cruise missiles in Western Europe. At that time the Left in Western Europe succeeded in convincing part of West European public opinion that the two superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union, were basically of the same, evil, nature. This was **the theory of moral equivalence, where some regarded the US as an “occupying” force in Western Europe on a par with the Soviet Union’s occupation of Eastern Europe.** While the East Europeans had to liberate themselves from the warmongering Soviets, the West Europeans were told that they had to “liberate” themselves from the warmongering Americans.

...In Western Europe, however, the idea of moral equivalence was reinforced after the collapse of communism in 1989. Contrary to the so-called “denazification” which took place in Germany after 1945, with prosecutions of Nazi criminals and collaborators and moral condemnations of civil servants who had remained silent, **there was no “decommification” after 1989.** On the contrary, many of the fellow travellers of the old regime simply turned their coats, rising to high positions in post-communist society...

...In Germany, the pivot and cornerstone of Europe, the former Communists were allowed to refound their own party after German reunification in 1990, as if the former Nazis had been allowed the same in 1945. **Others (such as Wolfgang Thierse and Rolf Schwanitz) who had been university professors in economics or law in East Germany – a position that was only open to collaborators of the regime – joined the SPD and became high-ranking Social-Democrat politicians in the new Germany.** This reinforced the message that, indeed, there was no real moral difference between the collaborators of the old communist puppet regimes installed by the Soviet occupiers in Central and Eastern Europe and the Western politicians who had backed the Atlantic Alliance. **It reinforced the message of the “peace” movement of the 1980s that the Soviet occupation was basically on a par with the American domination of Western Europe.** Now that the Soviet domination has ended, West European public opinion wants America out as well.”

The following article excerpts, which were reproduced from a recent Associated Press article (10/14/05), discusses how rising Anti-American sentiments may soon impact corporate bottom-lines. The article suggests how popular movements have been harnessed to protect European industries and the ‘European way of life’ against America, and its political, cultural and economic success.

The article focuses on short-term profit over longer term systemic concerns.

Ad exec: Anti-American views could hurt firms
Growing resentment over U.S. foreign policy, culture seen damaging brands
<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/9694124>

“Advertising executive Keith Reinhard has a message for U.S. companies: America's tarnished image may soon hurt your bottom lines.

Reinhard says growing anti-American sentiments and their impact on international sales aren't subjects corporations like to discuss publicly. But he says more executives are paying attention to warnings about shifting attitudes abroad.

‘Sooner or later, anti-Americanism has got to be bad for business,’ said Reinhard, president of Business for Diplomatic Action and chairman of the New York ad agency DDB Worldwide. ‘In marketing, we know that changes in behavior inevitably follow changes in attitude.’

Speaking Thursday at the Virginia Conference on World Trade, Reinhard encouraged businesses to practice diplomacy overseas and to take other actions, such as recruiting more foreign interns, to help change the way people view Americans.

Reinhard says the rising resentment has its roots in U.S. foreign policy, globalization's effects, pervasiveness of American popular culture and the "collective personality" of Americans.

'Americans are widely viewed as arrogant, loud, ignorant of other cultures and totally self-absorbed,' he said in an interview earlier this week. "We think that's an attitude and behavior that can be changed.'

Reinhard's camp points to several surveys that suggest a cooling toward America and its brands in many parts of the world.

In a recent poll of college-educated internationals ages 35 to 64, for instance, the public relations firm Edelman found that 32 percent of Europeans surveyed were less likely to buy U.S. products because of American culture. More than 40 percent of those polled in Canada, Europe and Brazil were less likely to purchase American products because of U.S. policies, Edelman said.

Not everyone is convinced there's a pressing issue. First, it's hard to quantify anti-Americanism's financial effect when few companies are talking about it. (Tourism is one exception.) And while well-known consumer brands like Marlboro and McDonald's might see boycotts, other U.S. companies say their lesser-known names simply aren't targets.

...But Paul Grossman, international trade director of the Virginia Economic Development Partnership, says what happens to big companies could trickle down to small and mid-sized firms. Those companies may never know what hit them; they'll just know they didn't get the contract, he said.