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LIU INSTITUTE FOR  
**GLOBAL ISSUES**

ANNEX 2

## **Workshop**

### **America in Question: Indonesian Democracy and the Challenge of Counter-terrorism in Southeast Asia**

Jakarta, January 28-29, 2006

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### **Anti-Americanism Among Contemporary Indonesians**

**Saiful Mujani**  
Lembaga Survei Indonesia

**R. William Liddle**  
Ohio State University

Co-organized by  
Centre for Strategic and International Studies, Jakarta  
The Liu Institute for Global Issues, University of British Columbia, Vancouver

Anti-Americanism is not a new phenomenon in Indonesia. Attitudes and even actions, peaceful as well as violent, with an anti-American frame often emerge in Indonesian society, as in other societies in the world. Why do anti-American attitudes emerge? To simplify, there are at least two reasons for anti-Americanism in the contemporary world. The first is a political reason, that is that the foreign policy of the world's most powerful country, guided by *realpolitik*, harms or damages other states and peoples. The roots of this view of anti-Americanism are located in national interests that differ between America and other countries (Gerges 1999). A second reason, connected to the first, is that many U.S. foreign policies are opposed because they are considered unjust. Conceptions of injustice are in turn rooted in civilizational differences. These differences lead to conflict between American civilization and the civilization of those other countries or societies that are anti-American (Huntington 1998).

This paper attempts to explore these two basic arguments. To that end we need first to discuss what is meant by "anti-Americanism," then what is meant by "unjust American foreign policies," and third what is meant by "civilization" in the context of Indonesian Muslim society.

"Anti-Americanism" in the international context is an individual or group attitude or action that reflects a feeling of dislike, hatred or intolerance toward America as a nation, or America as defined by the attitudes or behavior of the American government toward other countries.<sup>1</sup> It is not easy to decide how to measure these anti-American attitudes or actions. One way to uncover anti-American symptoms is by observing public opinion, and more specifically public opinion that is expressed by individual citizens. In this context a number of public opinion surveys have tried to operationalize this concept of anti-Americanism. Several of these concepts have been borrowed for the surveys that LSI has conducted in the last two years.<sup>2</sup> But the majority we have developed ourselves in order to achieve a better fit with the Indonesian Islamic context.

In this paper, anti-American behavior or actions are understood as actions that are carried out by individual Indonesian citizens that reflect an anti-American attitude. Anti-American actions are then operationalized in a number of actions that have been carried out by individuals in the last five years. These include: (1) persuading others that America is a threat toward the Muslim community; (2) urging members of Parliament, the regional legislatures, or government officials to break relations with America; (3) boycotting goods or services made in America; (4) demonstrating in opposition to American foreign policies that are considered to harm or damage Muslim countries; (5) demonstrating in opposition to policies/actions of the American government that support Israel in its conflict with with Palestine; (6) demonstrating in opposition to the occupation of Iraq or Afghanistan by America; (7) demonstrating in opposition to American internal intervention in Indonesia in the struggle against terrorism.

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<sup>1</sup> Rubinstein, Alvin Z., dan Donald E. Smith. 1988. "Anti-Americanism in the Third World." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 497 (May), 35-45.

<sup>2</sup> See for example the PEW survey, *Terror-Free Tomorrow*.

At the level of attitudes, this study operationalizes anti-Americanism via a number of indicators. These include: (1) favorable or unfavorable opinion about America as a nation; (2) support or lack of support for actions that boycott goods made in America; (3) attitude toward positive or negative values that are considered important by Americans; and (4) the level of appreciation for American culture as it appears in music and films from America.

### **Foreign Policy**

Actions against American foreign policy are operationalized in three ways as follows:<sup>3</sup> (1) demonstrations opposing American foreign policy that are considered to harm or damage Muslim countries; (2) demonstrations opposing policies/actions of the American government that support Israel in its conflict with Palestine; (3) demonstrations opposing the occupation of Iraq or Afghanistan by America; (4) demonstrations opposing what is regarded as American internal intervention in Indonesian politics in its dealing with terrorism.

Further, at the level of attitude, opposition to American foreign policy is operationalized in the following nine ways as: (1) agree or disagree that the recent American attacks against Afghanistan and Iraq represent an attack on Islam as a whole; (2) agree or disagree that anti-American actions are caused by the actions of America itself toward other countries and must be carried out by the Indonesian Muslim community; (3) agree or disagree that America often violates basic rights in other countries; (4) believe that the international campaign against terrorism is for the purpose of preventing terrorist actions such as occurred in America on 11 September 2001, or that the campaign is only an excuse to attack Islam and Muslims; (5) support or do not support demonstrations against America; (6) support or do not support criticism of American actions that harm or damage other countries; (7) support or not support efforts to pressure the Indonesian government to break relations with America; (8) agree or disagree that America treats Indonesia with dignity; (9) agree or disagree that America doesn't understand the problems that Indonesia confronts today.

### **Religion**

For Huntington, religion represents the root of a civilization, and religious difference gives birth to differences in civilization. In the context of Muslim society, anti-Americanism in the framework of Huntington is rooted in the difference between Islam and Christianity. Muslims become anti-American because their religion is Islam, and America is a country with a predominantly Christian population and civilization. Both Islam and Christianity are missionary religions. Both claim superiority over the other.

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<sup>3</sup> A number of these measures are replicated from surveys in several countries in the Middle East by Mark Tessler and his colleagues. Their results have not yet been published, but we have been given permission to replicate several of the measures.

In that context, in this study what is meant by “religion” is in the first instance “the religion to which one formally adheres” and in Indonesian society this mainly means Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Hinduism and Buddhism. Among these religions the relevant ones both theoretically and practically in terms of observation are Islam, Protestantism and Catholicism.

But for a part of Muslim society, Islam is not only a “nominal identity” but a complete way of life, organizing every aspect of Muslim life both individually and collectively. Islam which is perceived in this way we call “Islamism.” There are several components in this concept of Islamism. The first component we call the “Islamist agenda.” This includes a number of norms, here limited to the following: (1) the law of amputation for Muslim thieves must be implemented by the government of our country; (2) men may have more than one wife; (3) bank interest is prohibited; (4) women are prohibited to become leaders, including president; (5) in inheritance law, daughters must receive half as much as the portion given to sons; (6) a conviction that non-Muslims will never be happy with Muslims until those Muslims join their (non-Muslim) religion; (7) adulterers must be stoned until they die; (8) Muslim women may not marry men who are not Muslims.

Anti-Americanism takes the form of attitudes and actions, and because of that it constitutes a socio-political movement. In a movement, a psychological factor that is believed to be influential is alienation, and this is often operationalized among other things as “a feeling of being treated unjustly.” In the context of Muslim society, and in the context of Huntington, we frame the “feeling of being treated unjustly” in the statement “feel that the Muslim community is treated unjustly by adherents to other religions.” We label this “Islamist alienation.” And this is the second component of Islamism.

The logic behind Huntington’s conflict of civilizations is the conviction that Islam and Christianity are missionary religions and tend to want to vanquish each other. This means that there is a connection with the problem of toleration. Muslims will not be tolerant toward Christians and also the reverse. In this context, the third component of Islamism is “intolerance toward Christians,” which in this study comprises three indicators: objection to Christians becoming teachers in state schools; objection to Christians holding religious activities/services in Muslim-majority areas; and objections to Christians building churches in Muslim-majority areas.

### **Method and Data**

The LSI data that is used in this paper is based primarily on a national public opinion survey carried out in December 2004, together with some data from the December 2005 national survey and the 2005 local surveys in Aceh (NAD, Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam) (N=800) and Nias district (N=400), plus some data from a PEW survey. LSI surveys use the method of probability or multi-stage random sampling.

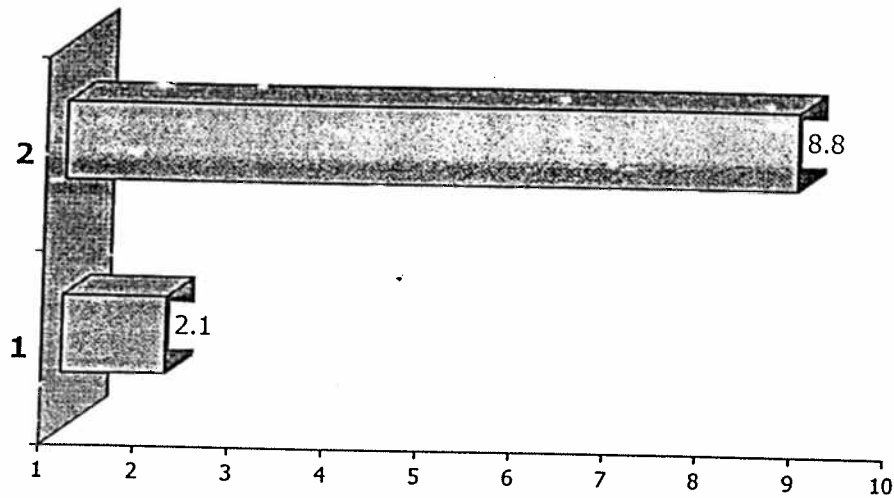
## **Findings**

### **a. Anti-American Attitudes and Actions**

Data from the national survey shows that in general relatively few Indonesians have been involved in anti-American actions in the last five years (Graph 1). Only 1.5% of the respondents say that they have ever carried out a demonstration opposing American foreign policy that is considered to harm or damage Muslim countries. Other actions are reported at about the same level, on average no more than 2% of the total adult Indonesian population. In other words, only about two out of every hundred Indonesians have ever carried out anti-American actions directly in one or another form during the last five years. The proportion that is somewhat higher is only action in the form of convincing others that America represents a threat toward the Muslim community. Even in this instance only about nine out of every hundred Indonesians reports that he or she has participated in such an action.

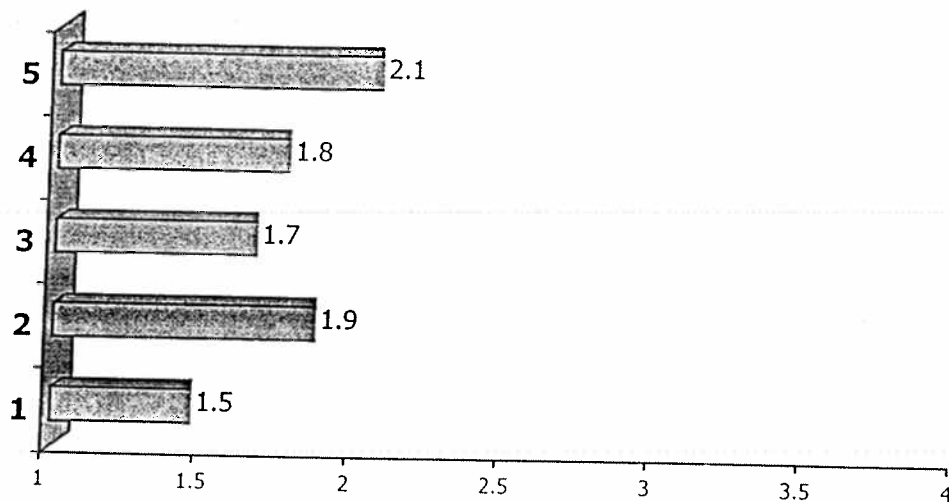
This fact shows that there is relatively little anti-American activity carried out by Indonesians. Anti-American demonstrations that often occur in the capital, in front of the American embassy, at most involve hundreds of thousands of people. Of course this is not a small number, but its importance is often exaggerated by the Indonesian media. In any event it is too small to make a claim that Indonesian society is anti-American, not to mention making the claim that has been heard that this is the anti-American century for Indonesian society. Nonetheless, the percentage of the population that acts to advance political causes like anti-American demonstrations—not just talking with or convincing others, and also not just keeping a feeling of dislike in the heart—is usually small everywhere in the world. But this small group often makes important news. Especially if the majority of citizens don't react negatively toward their actions. It is as if the majority agrees with them.

Graph 1. Anti-American actions (%)



*Explanation: In the last five years have you ever: (1) boycotted goods or services from the U. S.; (2) persuaded other people that America is a threat to other countries?*

Graph 2. Anti-American foreign policy actions (%)



*Explanation: In the last five years have you ever: (1) demonstrated against American foreign policy that is considered to have harmed or damaged Muslim countries; (2) demonstrated against policies/actions of the American government that support Israel in its conflict with Palestine; (3) demonstrated against the American occupation of Iraq or Afghanistan; (4) demonstrated against America for intervening in domestic Indonesian affairs in the handling of terrorism; (5) urged members of Parliament, the regional legislatures or government officials to break relations with America?*

We should not be surprised by the relatively few participants in actions described above compared to the population of adult Indonesians. For that reason it is also necessary to take the next step, to ask how many Indonesians say that they support the anti-American actions of others. Most people do not carry out actions even if they have anti-American attitudes for many reasons. One, perhaps, is the rational reason that they know that the results of acting and not acting will be the same. If you can get the result you desire without doing anything why should you act? In Islam there is a concept called *fardu kifayah*. The religious objectives of a Muslim are fulfilled without doing anything if some one else has done the same thing. If one's obligation is fulfilled without having fulfilled it oneself, as a rational Muslim, why should one do anything further? This might be especially true concerning an anti-American action that might contain a risk. For example one might be arrested by the police, be wounded from being struck by a stone or by a security guard, and so on. The problem of the free rider, someone who gets a profit without working and without investing capital in a collective action, probably often occurs in the case of anti-American actions.

For that reason the problem now must shift from the dimension of "action" to the dimension of "attitude," in the form of "anti-American attitudes." This includes the attitude of supporting or not supporting the anti-American actions described above.

To obtain a general picture concerning anti-American attitudes in Indonesian society, in the 2005 national survey members of Indonesian society were first asked "Is there a country in the world that you most dislike?" In answering this question 28% admit that there is a country that they most dislike. This means that about three out of every ten Indonesians have such an attitude. A further question was asked of this group: "What country is that?" As many as 58% name America as the most disliked country. This means that as a percentage of the whole population, about 16%, or about two out of every ten Indonesians dislike America (Graph 3). If compared to the previous year (2004), this negative sentiment has declined. At that time about 21% of Indonesians named America as the country they most disliked (Graph 4).

When America and a number of other countries were mentioned and then asked to be evaluated in terms of like or dislike toward those countries, the anti-American attitude became stronger (Graph 5).<sup>4</sup> About four of every ten Indonesians says that he or she doesn't like America. For comparison, it is significant that about three out of every ten Indonesians do not like Australia. At the same time only one out of ten Indonesians says that he or she dislikes Saudi Arabia.

The number of people who feel that they dislike America is larger than the number who have a favorable opinion of America even though the difference is not great. In addition there has also been a rising curve of support for America in the past two years. If in 2004 about 31% said that they like America, in 2005 the number rose to 36%.

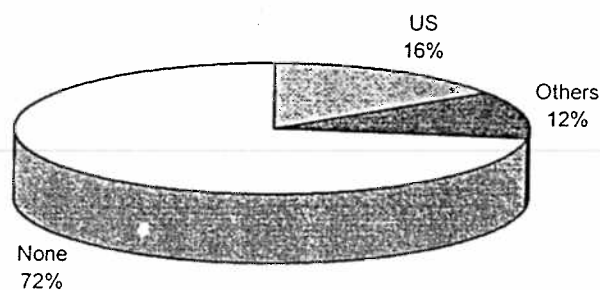
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<sup>4</sup> The same question was used in the global PEW survey.

Conversely, favorable attitudes toward Saudi Arabia have declined sharply from about 82% in 2004 to about 73% in 2005 (Graph 6).<sup>5</sup>

In addition to the general attitude toward America, favorable and unfavorable opinions of America in the 2004 survey were also assessed in terms of values considered important for American society. Toward a number of values suggested to the respondents, the largest group (20%) said that individual freedom was the most important value for Americans, followed by tolerance (9%) (Graph 8). More important, however, is how Indonesians perceived those values, whether they considered them as positive or negative qualities in a society. More Indonesians said that the values are positive (44%) compared with those who said the opposite (27%) (Graph 9). Most specifically, was individual freedom, according to our respondents considered important by Americans, evaluated as positive or negative? Fewer said positive than negative, 35% and 59% respectively. The rest said that they didn't know (Graph 10).

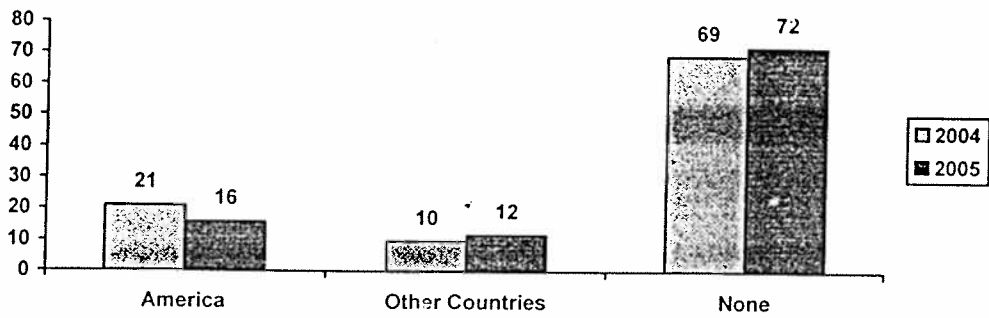
Graph 3. Countries in the world that are most disliked (open question), 2005 (%)



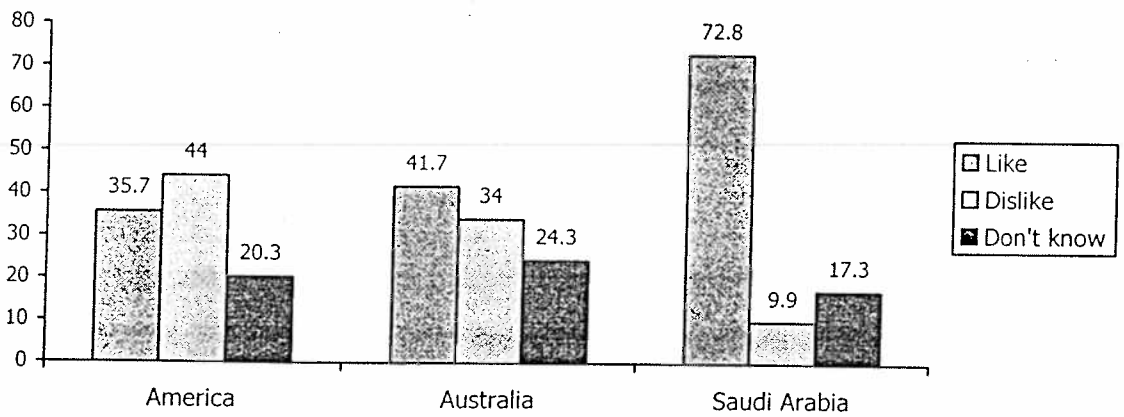
<sup>5</sup> The data for 2002, 2003, and May 2005 are from PEW, February 2005 is from Terror Free Tomorrow, and the data for 2004 and December 2005 are from LSI.



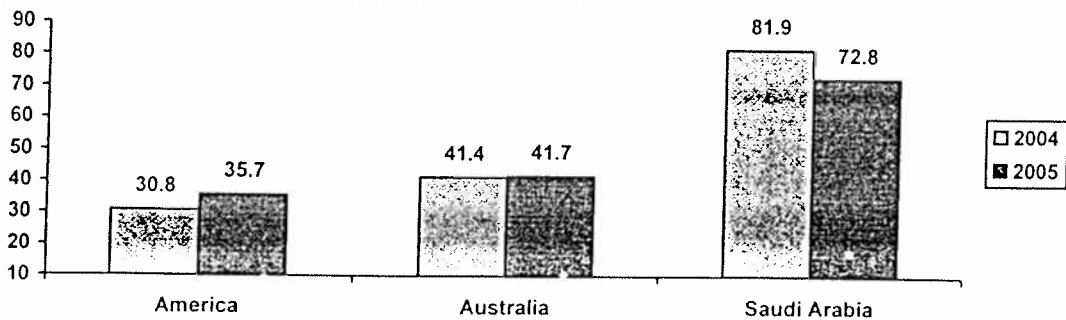
Graph 4. The country that is most disliked... (%)



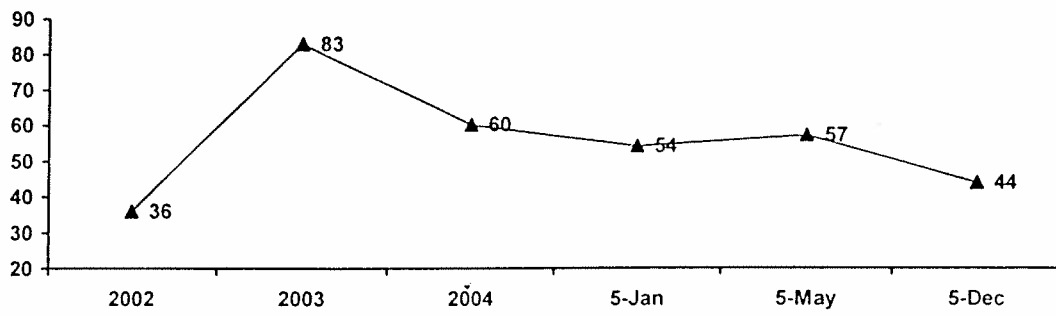
Graph 5. Favorable or unfavorable opinion toward a state ... (2005) (%)



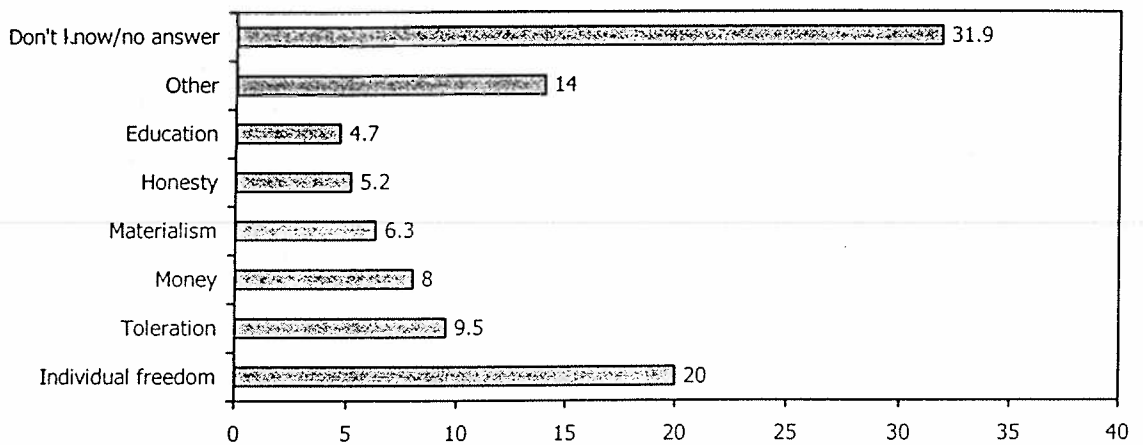
Graph 6. Favorable opinions toward the following countries, 2004 and 2005 (%)



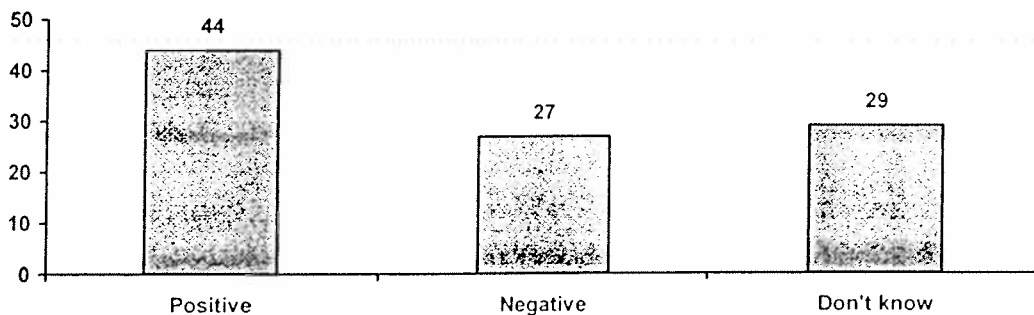
Graph 7. Unfavorable opinions of US (%)



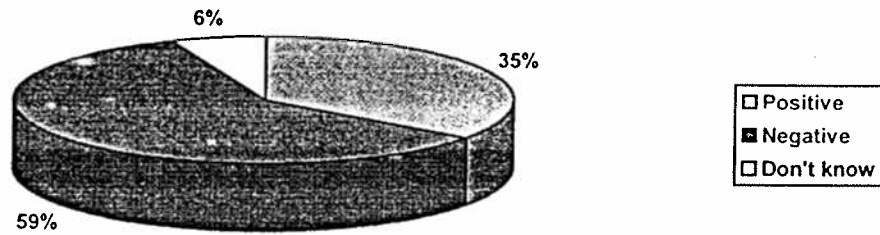
Graph 8. Values held strongly by Americans (%)



Graph 9. Are those American values positive or negative?



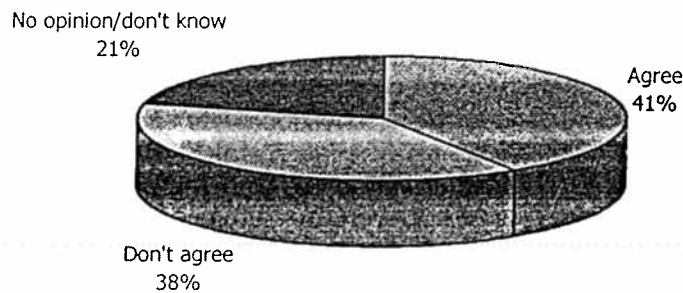
Graph 10. Evaluation of individual freedom (%)



b. Anti-American Foreign Policy Attitudes

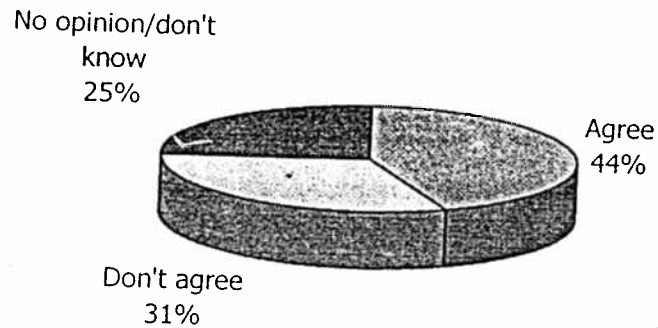
Aside from general evaluations toward America and of the values that are highly regarded by Americans, there is also the more specific evaluation of America's relations with other countries. Concerning this issue, respondents were first asked if they agreed or disagreed that the American attacks on Afghanistan and Iraq represented an attack against Islam as a whole (Graph 11). Four of every ten Indonesians agreed with this position. A similar proportion disagreed. On this matter Indonesian society is divided almost evenly.

Graph 11. The American attacks on Afghanistan and Iraq are attacks on Islam (%)



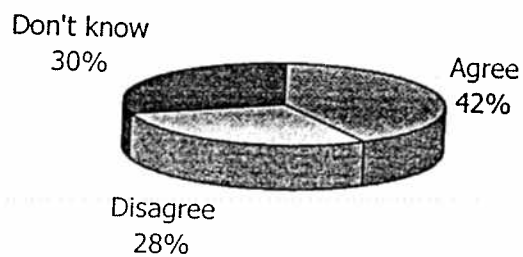
Negative sentiment toward America of about the same proportions was also apparent when respondents were asked if they agreed or disagreed that anti-American actions must be taken by members of the Indonesian Muslim community because of the actions of America against other countries. Four of ten Indonesians agreed and three of ten Indonesians said the opposite (Graph 12).

Graph 12. Anti-American actions must be supported by the Indonesian Muslim community (%)

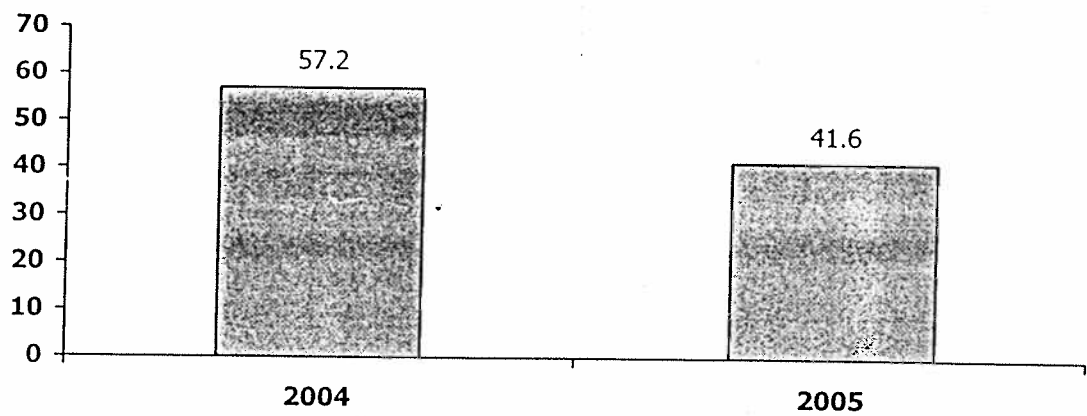


The proportion of negative sentiment toward America was about the same when it was asked if the respondent agreed or disagreed that America often violates basic rights in other countries. In the 2005 survey, four of ten Indonesians said that they agreed with this opinion, and three of ten Indonesians said the opposite (Graph 13). This proportion shows a decline in negative sentiment toward America compared with the results of the survey of the previous year (Graph 14).

Graph 13. America has frequently violated basic human rights in other countries, 2005 (%)

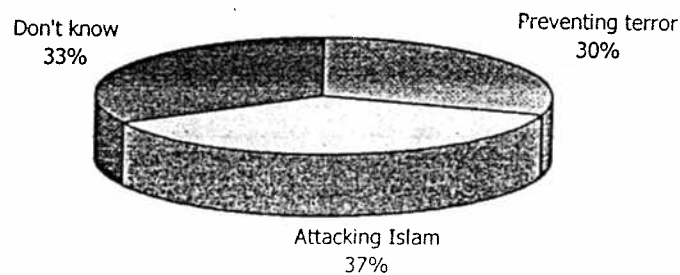


Graph 14. America often violates basic human rights in other countries, by year (%)



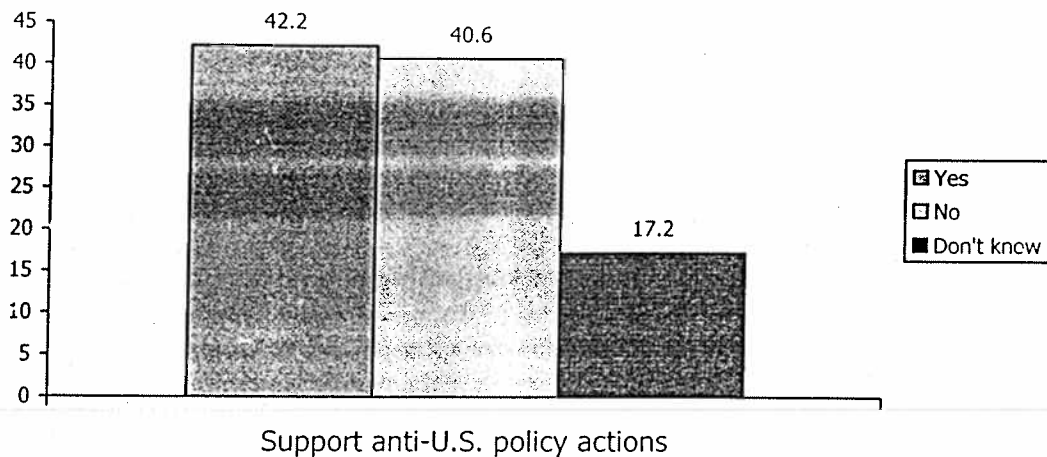
Since the tragedy of 11 September 2001, America has conducted an aggressive international anti-terrorist campaign. What are the attitudes of Indonesians toward this campaign? Is it seen as a genuine attempt to prevent a repetition of the 11 September 2001 tragedy, or only an American excuse to attack Islam and Muslims? On this issue, the 2004 survey results showed that four of ten Indonesians believe that the purpose of the campaign is to attack Islam, and three of ten Indonesians believe that the campaign is truly to prevent terrorism (Graph 15). So there are more who have a negative attitude toward America on this issue.

Graph 15. The American anti-terrorism campaign is for the purpose of...



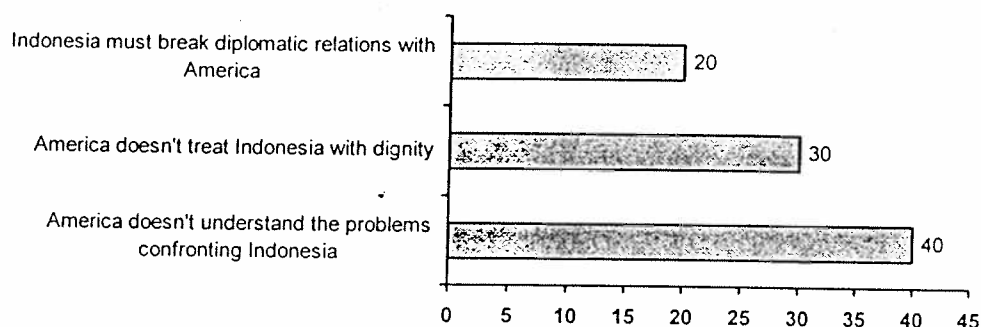
Anti-American attitudes are also visible in the responses of Indonesians concerning support demonstrations against America. Concerning this issue, the 2004 survey shows that: 42% of respondents support or agree with, even though they haven't participated in, demonstrations opposing America. Anti-American sentiment in the form of support for this action varies. It is relatively large though still representing less than a majority (Graph 16).

Graph 16. Attitudes toward actions and anti-American foreign policy protests (%)



This attitudinal pattern is also reflected in three issues that are connected to the relationship between Indonesia and America. When they were asked in general terms if America did not make an effort to understand problems confronted by Indonesia, four of ten Indonesians answered “yes” to the question. When they were asked if America treats Indonesia with respect and dignity, three of ten Indonesians said no. And, when they were asked whether Indonesia should break diplomatic relations with the U. S., only two out of ten Indonesians said yes (Graph 17).

Graph 17. The Indonesia-America relationship (%)



Seen in terms of the attitude toward America as a nation, certain values, and the relationship with other countries, anti-Americanism varies considerably but is in general rather large, especially if compared to anti-Americanism at the level of behavior or action. All of the indicator scores on ordinal scales concerning anti-American attitudes were added to create an index on a scale of one to five of anti-Americanism.<sup>6</sup> A score of one indicates very positive attitudes and five indicates very negative attitudes toward America. A score of three indicated a neutral position. The average score of this index is 3.11. This means that in general Indonesian society has adopted a neutral position between those who are positive and those who are negative toward America. Nonetheless there are more of those who tend to have very strongly negative attitudes (a score of >3.5) than those who have a strongly positive score (a score of <2.5), 21% to 15% respectively.

### c. Religion and Islamism

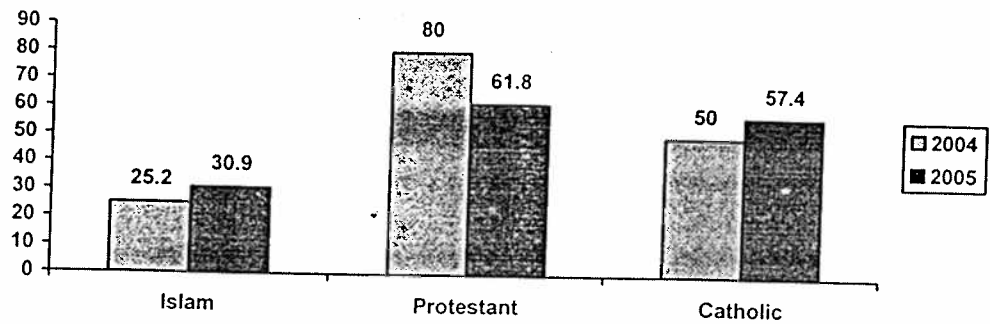
How much does religion affect positive or negative sentiments toward America among Indonesians? To begin, what is meant by religion is formal affiliation with a particular religion, in this case mostly Islam and Christianity.

Graph 18 shows that religious differences among Indonesian Muslims are related to attitudes toward America. Many fewer Muslims say that they like America (25% in 2004, 31% in 2005) compared with Protestants (80% and 62% in 2004 and 2005) and Catholics (50% and 57% in 2004 and 2005).<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Fifteen items concerning anti-American attitudes that are ordinally scaled are positively correlated. On this basis an index of anti-American attitudes can be constructed by adding all the scores for these fifteen items. The coefficient of reliability (alpha) index is 0.79.

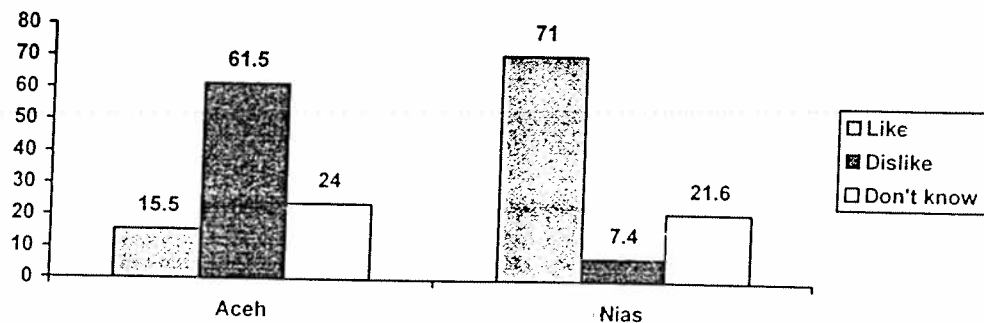
<sup>7</sup> The relationship between religious difference and like or dislike for America is statistically significant.

Graph 18. Favorable and unfavorable opinions of America in each religious group (%)



A significant connection between religious affiliation and attitude toward America is consistent across the local surveys of Aceh and Nias society. These two societies were struck together by the tsunami disaster and their socio-economic situation is about the same. There has been American assistance to both, although there has been much more focus on Aceh than on Nias. What mainly differs between the two regions is religion. Almost all Acehnese are Muslims and almost all of the people of Nias are Protestants or Catholics. In their attitude toward America the two also differ sharply (Graph 19). Only 15.5% of the Acehnese like America, while 71% of the people of Nias like America. At the other end of the spectrum, 61% of the Acehnese dislike America, while only 7% of the people of Nias fit into this category. Even though more Acehnese have been helped by America than in the case of Nias, Acehnese still don't like America. The people of Nias, on the other hand, even though less assisted by America, still like America more.

Graph 19. The proportion of favorable and unfavorable attitudes toward America in Aceh and Nias, 2005 (%)

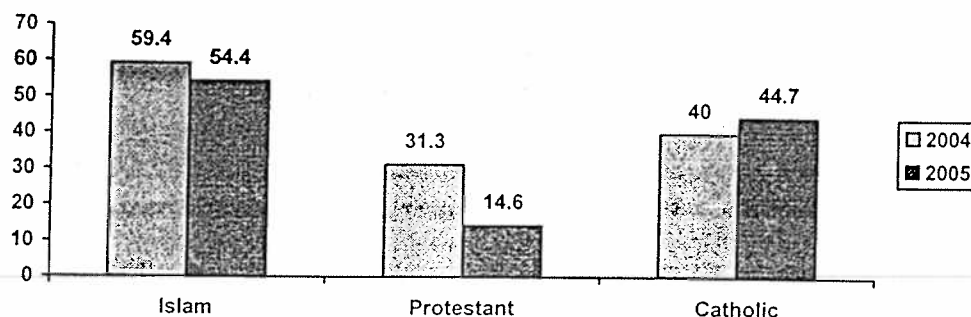




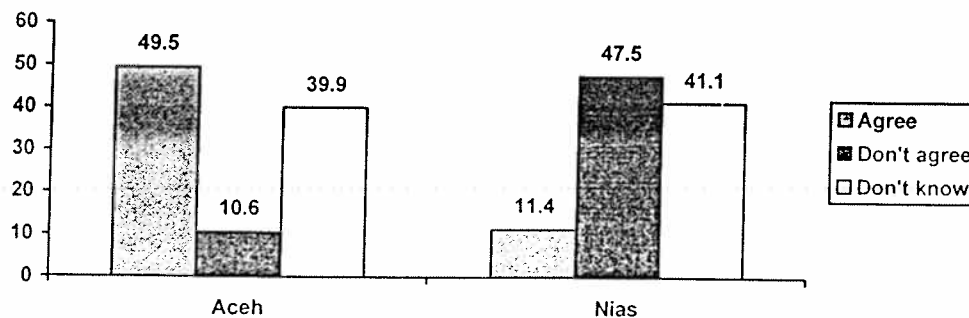
The significant influence of this religious difference on anti-American attitudes remains more or less stable when anti-Americanism is defined in terms of the view that America violates basic human rights in other countries. In the national survey, a majority of Muslims are convinced that America often violates basic human rights in other countries. Conversely, among Christians, a majority is not convinced that America violates the rights of many people (Graph 20).

This is also true of the attitudes of Christians in Nias and Muslims in Aceh in the local surveys. Nearly half of the people of Aceh have the opinion that America frequently violates basic human rights in other countries, and nearly half of the people of Nias say the opposite (Graph 21).

Graph 20. The proportion of respondents who perceive that America often violates basic human rights in other countries by religious group (%)



Graph 21. The perception that America often violates basic human rights in other countries according to respondents in Aceh and Nias, 2005 (%)



Islam as an identity has an influence on anti-American attitudes. But Islam is not a homogenous reality. The understanding of Islam and practices based on that understanding vary. There are Muslims who are “liberal” and those who are “Islamist.” How far does this variation influence anti-American attitudes?

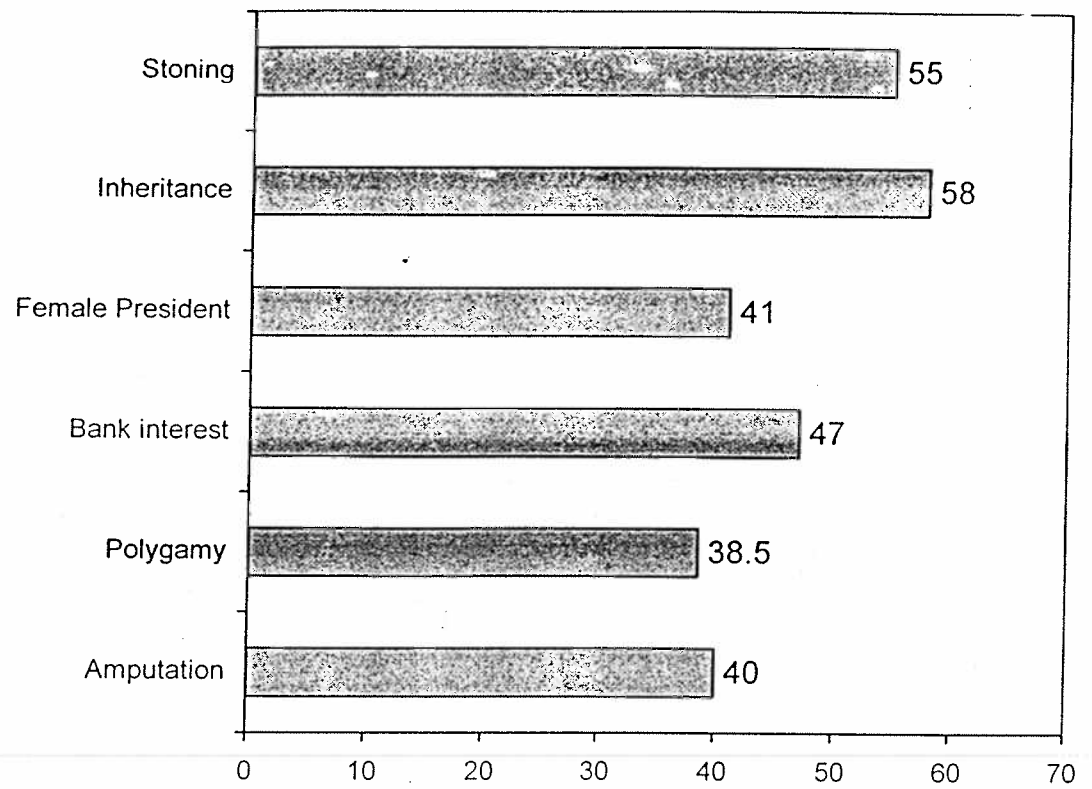
Before answering this question we will present a number of indicators of Islamism from the findings of the 2004 survey. Islamism as an understanding that Islam is a world view and a path that regulates all aspects of Muslim life comprises several dimensions. First are “Islamist agenda” items, that is norms that have developed in the teaching and tradition of this holistic understanding of Islam. For Islamists every effort must be made to put them into practice. In the 2004 survey, these agenda items included attitudes toward the law of stoning, amputation of limbs, polygamy, bank interest, prohibition for women to become state leaders or president, and the law of inheritance.

Graph 22 shows the proportion of positive attitudes of Indonesian Muslims toward a number of Islamic norms or laws. The majority support implementation of the law of stoning and the imbalance in the division of inheritance between male and female children. Support for the implementation of other Islamic norms is substantial, even though it doesn’t reach a majority. In general it can be said that the Indonesian Muslim community is divided in its attitude toward the implementation of the Islamist agenda. Some support and some reject it.<sup>8</sup>

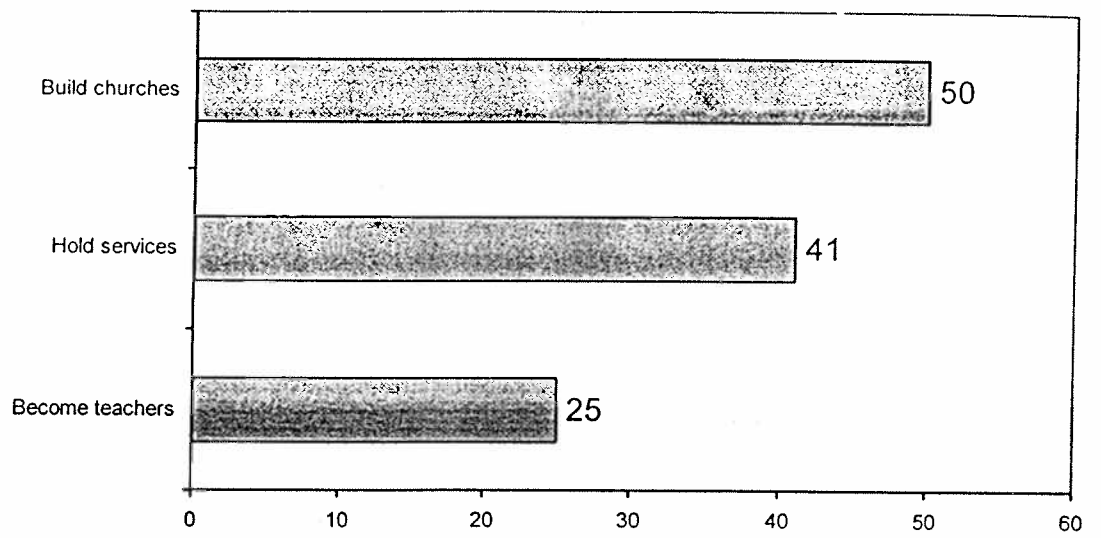
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<sup>8</sup> The scores of these six agenda items were added to form an “Islamist agenda index” with scores from 1 (strongly support) to 5 (strongly not support). The average score was 3.0, meaning that the Indonesian Muslim community in general neither supports nor rejects the Islamist agenda.

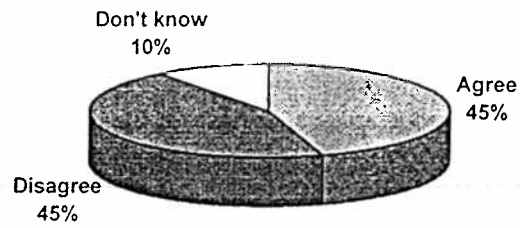
Graph 22. Agree with... (%)



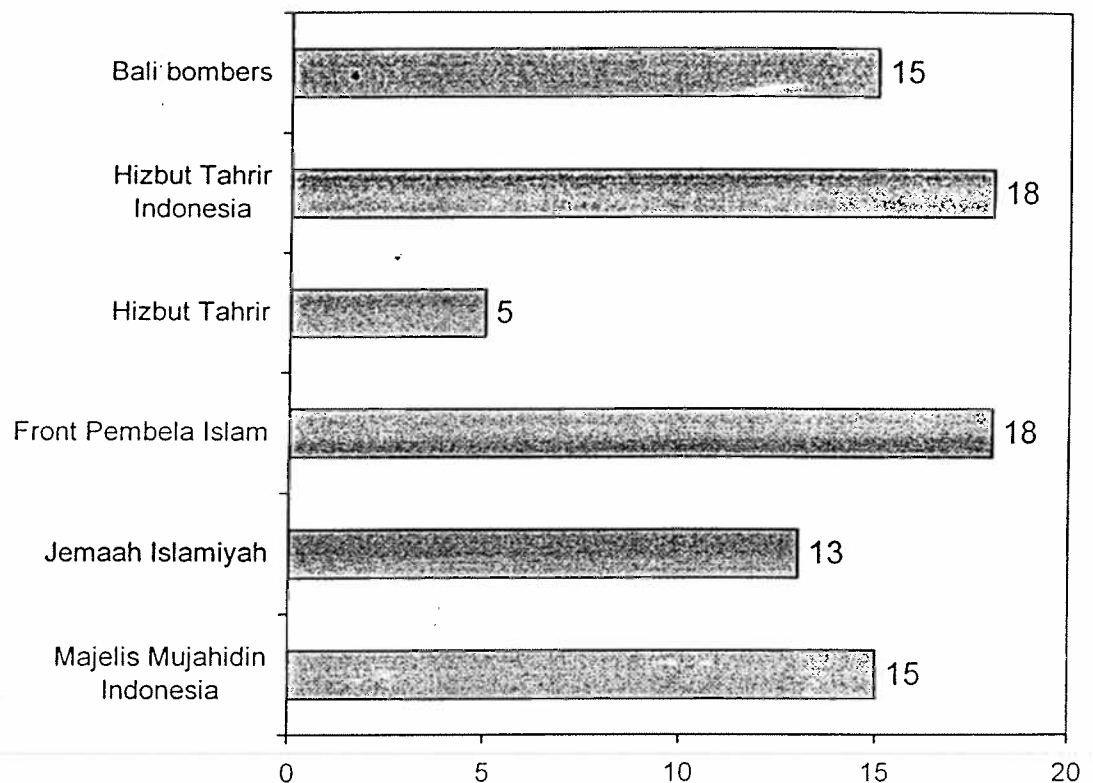
Graph 23. Object if Christians... (%)



Graph 24. Muslims world-wide are often treated unjustly by other religious groups (%)



Graph 25. Support for various Islamist groups (%)



d. Anti-Americanism, foreign policy, and religion

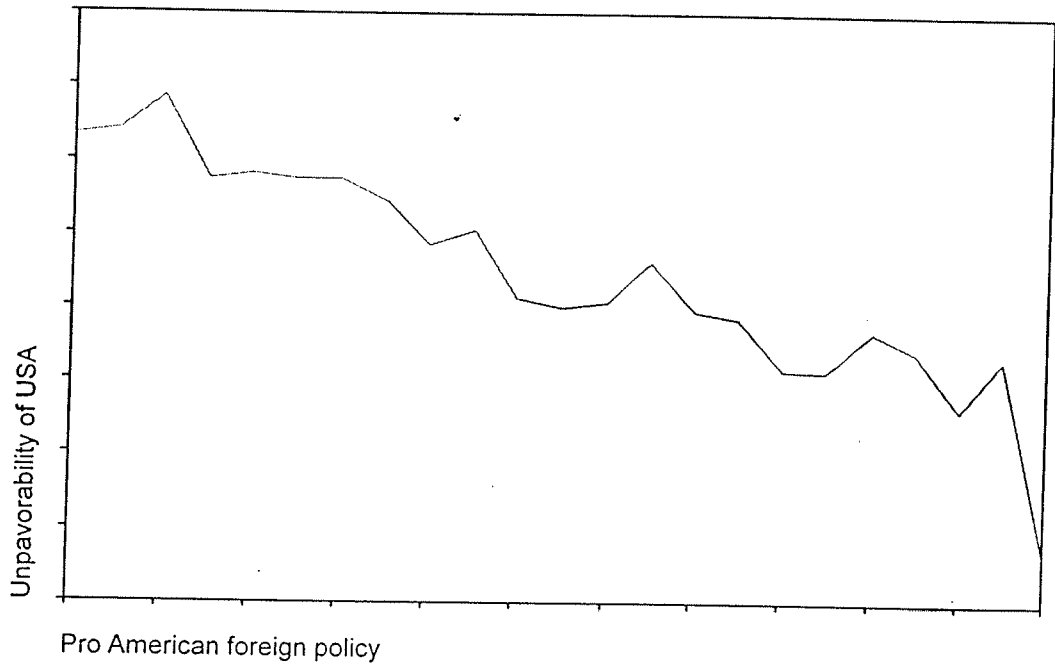
Analysis of the data shows that anti-American attitudes are triggered by American foreign policy that is perceived to harm or damage other countries, including Muslim countries (Graph 26). Religious difference and variations in degree of Islamism shape the perceptions of American foreign policies (Graph 27). Muslims, compared with Christians, and more Islamist Muslims tend to have a negative impression of the connection between America and other countries, including American foreign policies. Evaluation of the relationship between America and other countries and American foreign policies is framed by religious identity and Islamism.<sup>9</sup> In other words, the argument of a clash of civilizations, lying beneath an apparent conflict of interest between nations, accurately portrays the Indonesian situation.

In addition to American foreign policies themselves, perceived injustice toward Muslims, tolerance, support for Islamist groups and the Islamist agenda are crucial in shaping anti-Americanism in Indonesia. We may conclude therefore that efforts to

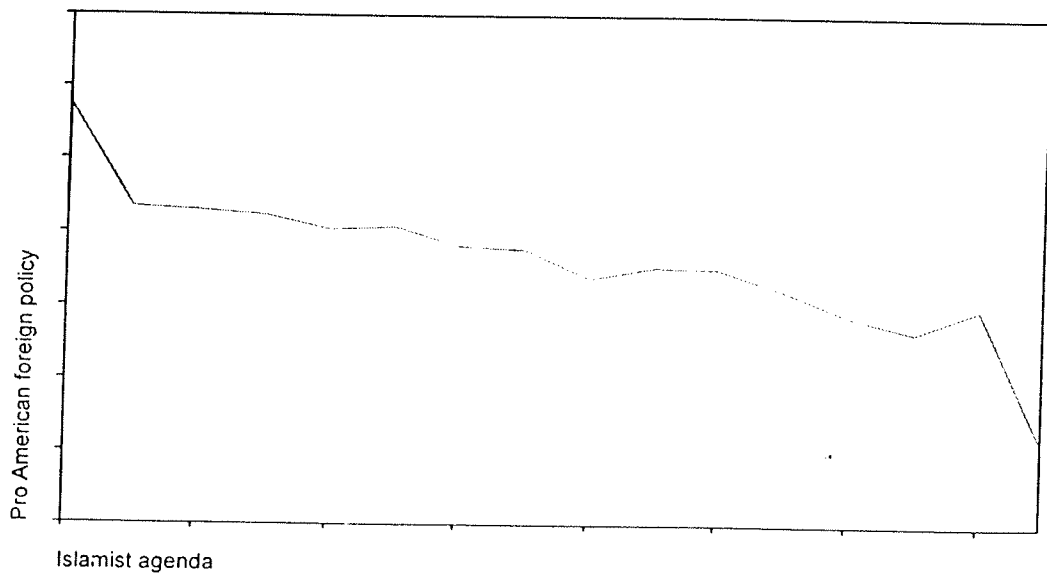
<sup>9</sup> Our multivariate analysis indicates that the negative impact of Islamism on U.S. foreign policies remains significant controlling for demographic variables.

reduce the attractive power of Islamism among Indonesian Muslims may help to reduce anti-Americanism among Indonesians.

Graph 26. Correlation between unfavorable attitudes toward US and support for US foreign policies ( $r = -0.39$ )



Graph 27. Correlation between Islamist agenda items and pro-American foreign policies ( $r = -.33$ )



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