

Chicago torpedoes by anti-U.S. sentiment?

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Some Chicago officials say anti-American resentment likely played a role in Chicago's Olympic bid dying in the first round Friday.

President Obama could not undo in one year the resentment against America that President Bush and others built up for years, they said.

"There must be" resentment against America, the Rev. Jesse Jackson said, near the stage where he had hoped to give a victory speech in Daley Center Plaza. "The way we [refused to sign] the Kyoto Treaty, we misled the world into Iraq. The world had a very bad taste in its mouth about us. But there was such a turnaround after last November. The world now feels better about America and about Americans. That's why I thought the president's going was the deal-maker."

State Rep. Susana Mendoza (D-Chicago) said she saw firsthand the resentment against America five years ago when she was in Rio de Janeiro. "I feel in my gut that this vote today was political and mean-spirited," she said.

"I travel a lot. . . . I thought we had really turned a corner with the election of President Obama. People are so much more welcoming of Americans now. But this isn't the people of those countries. This is the leaders still living with outdated impressions of Americans."

U.S. Rep. Jan Schakowsky (D-Ill.) said she was approached by a consul general at the plaza as they waited for word Friday. "He said . . . he was hearing that there wasn't enough time for Barack Obama to dispel the old image. . . . But I don't know if that's it."

Presidential press secretary Robert Gibbs rejected the notion that the vote was influenced by the United States' standing: "No, I think you saw both at the U.N. General Assembly, you saw at the G20 last week . . . I think virtually every measure of our standing in the world is different than it was just this time last year. So I don't read too much of that into this."

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