

RELEASE IN PART
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From: Abedin, Huma <AbedinH@state.gov>
Sent: Sunday, June 20, 2010 3:47 PM
To: H
Subject: Fw: Mo9rt Zuckerman

From haim.

From: Haim Saban [redacted]
To: Doug Band [redacted] Abedin, Huma
Sent: Sun Jun 20 13:23:55 2010
Subject: Mo9rt Zuckerman

This is a must read,,,,and your bosses too.

WOW!!!! What a hatchet job,,,this is the very strong "Coffeee party" ,,,,forget the tea party,,,, they're chicken sh,,,, compared to this. Just the tilte,,,,

Mort Zuckerman: World Sees Obama as Incompetent and Amateur
 The president is well-intentioned but can't walk the walk on the world stage
 By Mortimer B. Zuckerman
 Posted June 18, 2010

President Obama came into office as the heir to a great foreign policy legacy enjoyed by every recent U.S. president. Why? Because the United States stands on top of the power ladder, not necessarily as the dominant power, but certainly as the leading one. As such we are the sole nation capable of exercising global leadership on a whole range of international issues from security, trade, and climate to counterterrorism. We also benefit from the fact that most countries distrust the United States far less than they distrust one another, so we uniquely have the power to build coalitions. As a result, most of the world still looks to Washington for help in their region and protection against potential regional threats.

Yet, the Iraq war lingers; Afghanistan continues to be immersed in an endless cycle of tribalism, corruption, and Islamist resurgence; Guantánamo remains open; Iran sees how North Korea toys with Obama and continues its programs to develop nuclear weapons and missiles; Cuba spurns America's offers of a greater opening; and the Palestinians and Israelis find that it is U.S. policy positions that defer serious negotiations, the direct opposite of what the Obama administration hoped for.

The reviews of Obama's performance have been disappointing. He has seemed uncomfortable in the role of leading other nations, and often seems to suggest there is nothing special about America's role in the world. The global community was puzzled over the pictures of Obama bowing to some of the world's leaders and surprised by his gratuitous criticisms of and apologies for America's foreign policy under the previous administration of George W. Bush. One Middle East authority, Fouad Ajami, pointed out that Obama seems unaware that it is bad form and even a great moral lapse to speak ill of one's own tribe while in the lands of others.

Even in Britain, for decades our closest ally, the talk in the press—supported by polls—is about the end of the "special relationship" with America. French President Nicolas Sarkozy openly criticized Obama for months, including a direct attack on his policies at the United Nations. Sarkozy cited the need to recognize the real world, not the virtual world, a clear reference to Obama's speech on nuclear weapons. When the French president is seen as tougher than the American president, you have to know that something is awry. Vladimir Putin of Russia has publicly scorned a number of

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Obama's visions. Relations with the Chinese leadership got off to a bad start with the president's poorly-organized visit to China, where his hosts treated him disdainfully and prevented him from speaking to a national television audience of the Chinese people. The Chinese behavior was unprecedented when compared to visits by other U.S. presidents.

Obama's policy on Afghanistan—supporting a surge in troops, but setting a date next year when they will begin to withdraw—not only gave a mixed signal, but provided an incentive for the Taliban just to wait us out. The withdrawal part of the policy was meant to satisfy a domestic constituency, but succeeded in upsetting all of our allies in the region. Further anxiety was provoked by Obama's severe public criticism of Afghan President Hamid Karzai and his coterie of family and friends for their lackluster leadership, followed by a reversal of sorts regarding the same leaders.

Obama clearly wishes to do good and means well. But he is one of those people who believe that the world was born with the word and exists by means of persuasion, such that there is no person or country that you cannot, by means of logical and moral argument, bring around to your side. He speaks as a teacher, as someone imparting values and generalities appropriate for a Sunday morning sermon, not as a tough-minded leader. He urges that things "must be done" and "should be done" and that "it is time" to do them. As the former president of the Council on Foreign Relations, Les Gelb, put it, there is "the impression that Obama might confuse speeches with policy." Another journalist put it differently when he described Obama as an "NPR [National Public Radio] president who gives wonderful speeches." In other words, he talks the talk but doesn't know how to walk the walk. The Obama presidency has so far been characterized by a well-intentioned but excessive belief in the power of rhetoric with too little appreciation of reality and loyalty.

In his Cairo speech about America and the Muslim world, Obama managed to sway Arab public opinion but was unable to budge any Arab leader. Even the king of Saudi Arabia, a country that depends on America for its survival, reacted with disappointment and dismay. Obama's meeting with the king was widely described as a disaster. This is but one example of an absence of the personal chemistry that characterized the relationships that Presidents Clinton and Bush had with world leaders. This is a serious matter because foreign policy entails an understanding of the personal and political circumstances of the leaders as well as the cultural and historical factors of the countries we deal with.

Les Gelb wrote of Obama, "He is so self-confident that he believes he can make decisions on the most complicated of issues after only hours of discussion." Strategic decisions go well beyond being smart, which Obama certainly is. They must be based on experience that discerns what works, what doesn't—and why. This requires experienced staffing, which Obama and his top appointees simply do not seem to have. Or as one Middle East commentator put it, "There are always two chess games going on. One is on the top of the table, the other is below the table. The latter is the one that counts, but the Americans don't know how to play that game."

Recent U.S. attempts to introduce more meaningful sanctions against Iran produced a U.N. resolution that is way less than the "crippling" sanctions the administration promised. The United States even failed to achieve the political benefit of a unanimous Security Council vote. Turkey, the Muslim anchor of NATO for almost 60 years, and Brazil, our largest ally in Latin America, voted against our resolution. Could it be that these long-standing U.S. allies, who gave cover to Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and Iran's nuclear ambitions, have decided that there is no cost in lining up with America's most serious enemies and no gain in lining up with this administration?

The end result is that a critical mass of influential people in world affairs who once held high hopes for the president have begun to wonder whether they misjudged the man. They are no longer dazzled by his rock star personality and there is a sense that there is something amateurish and even incompetent about how Obama is managing U.S. power. For example, Obama has asserted that America is not at war with the Muslim world. The problem is that parts of the Muslim world are at war with America and the West. Obama feels, fairly enough, that America must be contrite in its dealings with the Muslim world. But he has failed to address the religious intolerance, failing economies, tribalism, and gender apartheid that together contribute to jihadist extremism. This was startling and clear when he chose not to publicly support the Iranians who went to the streets in opposition to their oppressive government, based on a judgment that our support might be counterproductive. Yet, he reaches out instead to the likes of Bashar Assad of Syria, Iran's agent in the Arab world, sending our ambassador back to Syria even as it continues to rearm Hezbollah in Lebanon and expands its role in the Iran-Hezbollah-Hamas alliance.

The underlying issue is that the Arab world has different estimates on how to deal with an aggressive, expansionist Iran. The Arabs believe you do not deal with Iran with the open hand of a handshake but with the clenched fist of power. Arab leaders fear an Iran proceeding full steam with its nuclear weapons program on top of its programs to develop intermediate-range ballistic missiles. All the while centrifuges keep spinning in Iran, and Arab leaders ask whether Iran will be emboldened by what they interpret as American weakness and faltering willpower. They did not see Obama or his administration as understanding the region, where naiveté is interpreted as a weakness of character, as amateurism, and as proof of the absence of the tough stuff of which leaders are made. (That's why many Arab leaders were appalled at the decision to have a civilian trial of Khalid Sheikh Mohammed in New York. After 9/11, many of them had engaged in secret counterterrorism activities under the umbrella of an American promise that these activities would never be made public; now they feared that this would be the exact consequence of an open trial.)

America right now appears to be unreliable to traditional friends, compliant to rivals, and weak to enemies. One renowned Asian leader stated recently at a private dinner in the United States, "We in Asia are convinced that Obama is not strong enough to confront his opponents, but we fear that he is not strong enough to support his friends."

The United States for 60 years has met its responsibilities as the leader and the defender of the democracies of the free world. We have policed the sea lanes, protected the air and space domains, countered terrorism, responded to genocide, and been the bulwark against rogue states engaging in aggression. The world now senses, in the context of the erosion of America's economic power and the pressures of our budget deficits, that we will compress our commitments. But the world needs the vision, idealism, and strong leadership that America brings to international affairs. This can be done and must be done. But we are the only ones who can do it.

<http://www.usnews.com/articles/opinion/2010/06/18/mort-zuckerman-world-sees-obama-as-incompetent-and-amateur.html>