

RELEASE IN
PART B5,B6

From: Steinberg, James B <SteinbergJB@state.gov>
Sent: Thursday, November 26, 2009 1:07 PM
To: H; Gordon, Philip H; Holbrooke, Richard C
Cc: Sullivan, Jacob J; cheryl.mills [REDACTED]
Subject: Re:

Again, I don't disagree that there's work to be done, and not something to discuss in detail in email Phil and I saw simon mcdonald yesterday, there are some things to follow up there too. Look forward to more detailed discussions

Happy t-day to all

----- Original Message -----

From: H <HDR22@clintonemail.com>
To: Gordon, Philip H; Steinberg, James B; Holbrooke, Richard C
Cc: Sullivan, Jacob J; 'cheryl.mills' [REDACTED] <cheryl.mills [REDACTED]>
Sent: Thu Nov 26 11:54:21 2009
Subject:

Dear Phil, Jim and Richard,

First, Happy Thanksgiving! I am making FM calls re Afghanistan which are going well and the memcons will describe the specific responses for our followup, especially in Athens and Brussels.

Below is a memo from a concerned observer about the British feeling alienated from us. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Let me know what you each think. Thx.

Consensus across the board in Britain—center, right, left—is that the Atlantic alliance—the special relationship—the historic bond since World War II—is shattered. There is no dissenting voice, not one, and there are no illusions. Opinion is unanimous. The bottom line is that the Obama administration's denigration of the UK is seen as the summation of the Bush era.

Undoubtedly, you saw this week Minister of Defense Bob Ainsworth's public criticism of Obama's indecision and his accusation that the president is indifferent and damaging to British interest. While Downing Street sought to ameliorate his remarks with an oleaginous statement his view is simply what everyone—everyone—thinks. His clumsy outburst was a classic gaffe—an embarrassing mistake because it reveals something true.

The Chilcot inquiry of Parliament, publicly conducting hearings on the origins of UK involvement in the Iraq invasion, has put Bush's war on terror—and British involvement—on trial—and the calmly conducted but eviscerating hearings will go on for another year. Blair is seen as either complicit on the basis of knowing there was no casus belli or as an enthusiastically deceived tool. Nick Clegg, leader of the Liberal Democrats, has stated that the reason support for the Afghanistan mission has cratered is because of the lies told in the run-up to the Iraq war—another view universally held.