

RELEASE IN PART
B6

From: H <hrod17@clintonemail.com>
Sent: Sunday, December 5, 2010 6:52 PM
To: 'sbwhoeop' [redacted]
Subject: Re: H: Good piece counters decline theme. Sid

There are, thankfully, several of these pieces around now.

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

From: sbwhoeop [redacted]
To: H
Sent: Sun Dec 05 13:14:29 2010
Subject: H: Good piece counters decline theme. Sid

Newsweek <<http://www.newsweek.com/etc/designs/newsweek/img/logo/print-logo.png>>

<http://www.newsweek.com/2010/12/05/not-dead-yet.html#>

Not Dead Yet

A United States with geopolitical muscle like no one else.

by Christopher Dickey <<http://www.newsweek.com/authors/christopher-dickey.html>> and Andrew Bast
 <<http://www.newsweek.com/authors/andrew-bast.html>> December 05, 2010

Leaking diplomatic dispatches used to be a recognized diplomatic art. In the not too distant past, American ambassadors in Central America or the Middle East <<http://www.newsweek.com/tag/middle-east.html>> who thought Washington was ignoring their cables would share them with correspondents, knowing that news reports would have a better chance of reaching the secretary of state's desk than almost any memo the ambassadors wrote themselves.

The very essence of diplomacy between nations in the old days—maybe even yesterday—lay in knowing the difference between official communications, unofficial ones, and those that, being leaked, might be denied. (During the American Civil War, the U.S. secretary of state once read a confidential dispatch word for word to the correspondent for the London Times, just to make sure the British foreign secretary got his point ... unofficially.) All of these modes had their uses for signaling intent, saving face, or stepping back from a brink. And they still do, as the 250,000 U.S. State Department cables that have begun appearing on Wikileaks.ch amply demonstrate.

Video muted: click volume for sound Cartoonist Takes on WikiLeaks Animator Mark Fiore examines the consequences of the whistleblower site's recent online leaking of classified U.S government cables.

Inside State, in the ferocious competition for the attention of the secretary, candor and accuracy were also part of the game. Cables with pithy descriptions of Russia's president and prime minister as "Batman and Robin" are more likely to be read than those that are blandly academic. And who can forget the cable describing Libyan leader Muammar Kaddafi's Ukrainian nurse who travels "everywhere with the leader." "The guy who wrote this had it nailed!" says a veteran CIA officer who read the Kaddafi dispatch. "Without this kind of writing, the cables would be dull as butter."

One of the great ironies of the latest WikiLeaks dump, in fact, is that the industrial quantities of pilfered State Department documents actually show American diplomats doing their jobs the way diplomats should, and doing them very well indeed. When the cables detail corruption at the top of the Afghan government, the Saudi king's desire to be rid of the Iranian threat, the personality quirks of European leaders, or the state of the Russian mafiocracy, the reporting is very much in line with what the press has already told the public. There's no big disconnect about the facts; no

The administration appears to be banking on its ability to use those three months to guide the two sides to an agreement on a border separating Israel from a future Palestinian state, a deal that ideally and by definition would erase the dispute over settlements.

Such a plan would incorporate settlements into Israeli territory in return for equivalent amounts of land to the Palestinians.

"This will require toughness and reassurance - not just honey, but vinegar, too," former State Department Mideast negotiator Aaron David Miller wrote in Foreign Policy magazine. "Obama has already received his Nobel Peace Prize; the time to earn it may be just around the corner."

A first hurdle confronting Obama - and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu - is persuading hardline members of the Israeli government coalition to go along with a temporary extension of the settlement freeze, which is not certain and has not come to a vote in Israel's Security Cabinet.

A hoped-for Cabinet vote Wednesday has been postponed with no new date set.

Setting a border, or even creating momentum to keep talks alive beyond the extended freeze, would be a major achievement.

Palestinians insist the border agreement must reflect the frontier that existed before the 1967 war, after which the Israelis occupied the West Bank and annexed east Jerusalem.

Obama first stepped onto the Mideast tightrope in May 2009, declaring that Israeli-Palestinian peace was a top priority for his young administration. At the time, he sternly demanded the Israelis stop settlement building.

"There is a clear understanding that we have to make progress on settlements, that settlements have to be stopped in order for us to move forward," Obama said, referring to past failed negotiations.

Obama was publicly rebuffed by Netanyahu after their first White House meeting and a notably tense encounter with reporters in the Oval Office.

After intense U.S. pressure, the Israelis finally put in place a partial freeze lasting 10 months, but the Palestinians did not agree to resume talks until shortly before the freeze expired on Sept. 26.

The negotiations plunged into a deep freeze before they had barely started. The Palestinians insist that talks are pointless as long as Israel is building settlements.

After watching fellow Democrats suffer bruising defeats in congressional elections, Obama is looking toward his own campaign for re-election in 2012.

He needs a big win on foreign policy, and brokering an Israeli-Palestinian peace that has eluded U.S. leaders for six decades would certainly be that.

To this end, the Obama administration has moved a significant distance from its original demands on Israel and its settlements.

In public, however, there has been little movement by either the Israelis or Palestinians.

With both sides so entrenched, it is impossible to say where the U.S.-brokered talks are headed.

Paradoxically, and as difficult as that would be, "the Israeli-Palestinian issue is probably the least hopeless challenge he faces in the broader Middle East," writes Miller, calling that "a stunning reminder of the cruel and unforgiving world he now inhabits with Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq and transnational terrorism all posing serious dangers."

EDITOR'S NOTE - Steven R. Hurst has covered foreign affairs for 30 years.