

RELEASE IN FULL

CONFIDENTIAL

August 22, 2011

For: Hillary
From: Sid
Re: Your statement post-Q

Just a quick note:

First, brava! This is a historic moment and you will be credited for realizing it.

When Qaddafi himself is finally removed, you should of course make a public statement before the cameras wherever you are, even in the driveway of your vacation house. You must go on camera. You must establish yourself in the historical record at this moment.

The most important phrase is: "successful strategy."

Just a few points:

*The US has pursued a successful strategy in Libya. We did not know how long it would take, but we knew it would not be easy, and that it would require steadiness and persistence. This was the right course, based on our interests and principles. And it has worked.

*Do not skimp on the reasons in the US interest behind the successful strategy: We prevented a humanitarian tragedy on a vast scale. Qaddafi, who had already killed 2,000 people in April, threatened to massacre the residents of Benghazi, tens if not hundreds of thousands of people. We worked closely with our NATO allies, proving that cooperation within the Western alliance can achieve our mutual goals. The US has demonstrated its principled belief in the rule of law and acted on the basis of the United Nations resolution. We have supported the legitimate aspirations of the Libyan people for democracy and freedom. We have ousted a murderous dictator who has been a source of terrorism, civil war throughout Africa and a prop for dictators elsewhere. By acting in Libya we have helped advance the cause of democracy and freedom throughout the Arab world. We have provided an important support for neighboring Egypt. We have put Assad on notice that the sands of time have run out for him as well. Our successful strategy in Libya stands as a warning that our strategy will work again. Etc.

*Be aware that some may attempt to justify the flamingly stupid “leading from behind” phrase, junior types on the NSC imagining their cleverness. To refute this passive construction on US policy and help remove it as an albatross from the administration as it enters the election year, do not be defensive but rather simply explain that the US had a clear strategy from the start, stuck with it and has succeeded.

*Then you can say whatever on future policy—but only after asserting the historic success and explaining the reasons why.

*This is a very big moment historically and for you. History will tell your part in it. You are vindicated. But don’t wait, help Clio now.