

RELEASE IN PART
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From: sbwhoep [redacted]
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To: H
Subject: latest on Gordon Brown, etc. Sid

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Spoke with Shaun and Jonathan Powell. Gordon's situation remains desperate with the next day crucial--meeting of the Parliamentary Party Monday. The coup attempt is disorganized, uncoordinated and lacking any strategy. There are four elements to the revolt: far left, handful of Blairites, disappointed job seekers, and people who believe Gordon is taking the Labour ship down with him. Margaret McDonough, the former party general secretary, falls in the latter category, and if this mess has a leader it's her. Her motive is simply that she thinks Gordon is sinking the party. Peter has assumed control within the government. Gordon is now utterly dependent on him. Purnell was naive and rash in quitting; he acted alone. He told people he just "couldn't take it anymore." Not someone for a foxhole. He believed David would jump with him. David has been caught in a vise. Some Blairites feel he should have quit and by his resignation deliver the coup de grace to Gordon. Others are frustrated that he didn't lead a revolt earlier when he made a faint gesture in that direction. He's not getting much credit now. The European Parliamentary election returns in the UK are just coming in as I write, but everyone expects a disastrous showing for Labour. In the local elections Oabour lost every county council it controlled; it now has none--that is, not one. Because of this dismal news Gordon in the hours ahead is still not considered safe, though he ought to be. Only until the Parliamentary Party votes on Monday will he escape. Peter tells Jonathan that the government will roll out many policies, but from talking to Shaun (who was on his way to No. 10 to see Gordon this afternoon) there is no post-revolt strategy, not even a sense of using the upcoming G-8 as an organizing event. It's hour by hour; then it will be day by day. Meanwhile, in the European parliamentary elections on the continent the far right parties have made the largest gains since, well, since you imagine; the center-right has more or less held it's own (five point loss of CDU in Germany, considered good; Sarkozy and Berlusconi riding high). The Social Democrats everywhere have collapsed or are near collapse. In short, in Europe, the immediate effect of the economic crisis has been to empower the neo-populist right. Labour's difficulties are specific, but in context not unique, part of a general trend. The US stands apart. The US and Europe politically have not been so out of sync for decades. Sid

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