

RELEASE IN FULL

CONFIDENTIAL

July 9, 2009

For: Hillary  
From: Sid  
Re: Your CFR speech

1. The draft, sent by separate email, is intended to give you options and ideas. Use as you wish. Several ideas are at the core of this version: in particular, the concept of the US as a modern global nation and how that serves our capacity for leadership.
2. For most policy speeches a generic tone and workmanlike prose are acceptable. But for this one, it is not. This speech can't afford to be lackluster. It will then be held up in invidious comparison to Obama's glittering best efforts. Your speech must have, amid the policies, a distinctive and authoritative voice.
3. Your early draft makes no distinctions between allies or partners; indeed, it barely mentions allies. The early draft also features a strong malaise theme. Even if rebutted after being raised, the focus is on obstacles and hindrances, not on achievements, opportunities and what can be achieved. There's no accounting of progress so far. The effect is downbeat in tone. At the same time, the draft contains passages of vague and gauzy liberal universalism, while in one line assailing it, an unconvincing juggling act. The notion that all nations and peoples want the same things as Americans will not fly and is open to derision. It reflects blithe liberal cultural imperialism, among other things. (See Graham Greene. And, on the contrary, some nations—and peoples—seek nuclear weapons, like Iran; some don't want to curb global warming, like China; some don't care about human rights, like most Arab nations; some have contempt for democracy, including de facto allies like Egypt, not to mention Myanmar; and some are indifferent to poverty, any number of African kleptocracies.) Also there is some confusion of definitions, for example, asserting dialogue with adversaries is "strategic engagement," when that is a concept usually applied to allies and partners.
4. The speech must be crafted with a sense of real time and cannot be delivered out of sync with it. Slogans can become shopworn, especially those that lack analytical, historical and descriptive power. What served you once, at your confirmation, may not serve again in the same way. The most cogent foreign policy columnists from Clive Crook of the Financial Times to David Rothkopf of Foreign Policy have already written columns in the last week on the limits of "soft power" (i.e., "smart power") and others I understand are preparing to make similar criticisms. I would use sparingly or not at all. You do not

**need to have a complex foreign policy agenda reduced to two words that the administration's adversaries will undoubtedly use against you.**