

RELEASE IN PART  
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**From:** Sullivan, Jacob J <SullivanJJ@state.gov>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 2, 2010 6:52 PM  
**To:** H  
**Subject:** Re: Anything to report?

Few things.

First, Karzai's spokesman spoke to a Reuters reporter who put out a piece pasted at the bottom. Our statement is out and PJ has very clear backgrounding marching orders -- [REDACTED] Karl says he will work with Karzai to shape his public statements over the weekend.

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[REDACTED]  
 I believe you should review and discuss with Mitchell, Feltman, and Prince tomorrow if you have time. Happy to provide further context at your convenience.

Fourth, FT is writing for Monday on Jones letter to KE. Current plan is to have PJ comment. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Working on that.

Fifth, plans to move forward toward 6PT - including visit by KKG - on hold now because of the sinking of the vessel.

That's the news.

Here's the piece. Headline good, lead quote good, then it goes a bit downhill -- but [REDACTED] PJ's quote is troubling ... He's back on the reservation now.

Karzai tries to smooth spat with U.S. over speech

Apr 2, 2010 16:27 EDT

WASHINGTON/KABUL (Reuters) – Afghan President Hamid Karzai tried to smooth over his fraying relationship with Washington on Friday after the White House said it was troubled by a strident anti-Western speech he delivered in Kabul.

In his unprecedentedly bitter speech to election officials on Thursday, the Afghan leader accused embassies of perpetrating election fraud in Afghanistan, bribing and threatening election officials and seeking to weaken him and his government.

“Obviously some of the comments of President Karzai are troubling. They’re cause for real and genuine concern,” White House spokesman Robert Gibbs told reporters, adding the White House was seeking clarification.

Later, Karzai’s spokesman said the Afghan leader had spoken to U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton by telephone.

During the call, “President Karzai said the Afghan people and Afghan government were grateful for the support and sacrifice of the international community for peace in Afghanistan and the world,” Karzai’s spokesman Waheed Omer said.

Omer said parts of Karzai's remarks had been misunderstood.

"Obviously there is a difference of opinion on certain issues between Afghanistan and its international partners, but the president wanted the international community to pay attention to the concerns of the Afghan people and the Afghan government."

In his speech, Karzai accused foreigners of carrying out "massive fraud" in last year's presidential vote in a deliberate effort to undermine his authority, and said they also wanted to wreck a parliamentary election this year.

"Foreigners will make excuses, they do not want us to have a parliamentary election," Karzai said. "They want parliament to be weakened and battered, and for me to be an ineffective president, and for parliament to be ineffective."

At a news briefing, State Department spokesman P.J. Crowley responded: "Suggestions that somehow the international community was responsible for irregularities in the recent election is preposterous."

#### CHILLY RELATIONSHIP

Karzai's speech came at a time when President Barack Obama's administration has been increasingly critical of his record on corruption, an issue Karzai has said is overblown and largely the fault of the West for failing to safeguard its aid budgets.

Karzai's relationship with the Obama administration has been chilly from the outset, and deteriorated last year when a U.N.-backed watchdog found widespread fraud in a presidential election, throwing out a third of the votes cast for him.

The U.S. ambassador in Kabul, Karl Eikenberry, wrote in a classified cable last November, later leaked, that Karzai was "not an adequate strategic partner".

Karzai is now wrangling with parliament and the United Nations over rules for a parliamentary vote due in September, and has tried to strip U.N. appointees from the vote-fraud watchdog.

Obama made a quick, unannounced trip to Afghanistan on Sunday night to visit U.S. troops and hold talks with Karzai. Some Afghans saw the visit as a snub, because Obama arrived and left under cover of darkness and avoided answering media questions.

Gibbs said Obama "was quite clear with President Karzai over the weekend of the necessary steps that have to be taken to improve governance and corruption in order to deal with the problems that we face there."

Asked if a planned meeting between Obama and Karzai in Washington in May was still on, he said: "As of right now, yes".

Mistrust between Karzai and the West could hurt the campaign on the battlefield in coming months, when U.S. troops launch the war's biggest operation in the southern city of Kandahar, said Tim Ripley, defense writer for Jane's publications in Britain.

"The obvious problem is, the aim of counter-insurgency war is to win the population to the cause. And if you don't believe in the cause, it's difficult to sell it to the population," he said.

"They seem to be not having much confidence in the Afghan government, and the Afghan government doesn't have much confidence in us either."

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

From: H <HDR22@clintonemail.com>  
To: Sullivan, Jacob J  
Sent: Fri Apr 02 18:30:59 2010  
Subject: Anything to report?