

RELEASE IN FULL

CONFIDENTIAL

May 5, 2010

For: Hillary
From: Sid
Re: British election

First and most important: Do NOT, repeat, NOT, call any prospective winner on either Election Night, May 6, or on the next day, Friday, May 7. The result will be unclear. It will not be clear, even perhaps by Friday afternoon. Today, the combined polls show Cameron and the Conservatives ahead but not winning an outright majority. The latest Guardian poll, out tomorrow, shown me by Alan Rusbridger today, has the Tories falling short of a majority of seats. Even if Cameron were to win an outright majority, Brown and Labour will attempt to make a deal with Clegg and the Liberal Democrats. Brown remains as Prime Minister unless the Tories win outright, which take a long time to determine. Labour and the Lib-Dems will almost certainly gain about 60 percent of the vote, more or less. Brown will reach out to Clegg to stay in power. The deal will be that Brown will approve a referendum on proportional representation giving the LDs much greater representation in future elections. That will spell the end forever of the Tories ever coming to power. The Tories see the election in apocalyptic terms—and they are not wrong. Brown's weakness heralds the sort of grand progressive coalition/alliance that Tony imagined but was never able to attempt between Labour and the LDs. Brown offering the referendum would be the first step toward that. In the case of the Tories falling short of an outright majority in seats, they will respond as though Brown is acting illegitimately, which he would not be by remaining as PM and dealing with Clegg. Informed people are already talking of what might begin to unfold on Friday as "Florida." The Tories, backed by the Murdoch press, will attempt to push Labour aside by force majeure—something that will not succeed under those circumstances. The Murdochs are almost literally going crazy. James Murdoch and his wife stormed into the offices of The Independent, not a Murdoch paper, when the paper endorsed the LDs and confronted the publisher, screaming in the middle of the newsroom. Murdoch would be a big, big loser if Cameron loses. Another possible outcome is that the Conservatives come up just short and attempt their own deal with the DUP to cover the gap in seats. Shaun is on to this potential, has been talking to Peter Robinson.

No matter what, keep your powder dry until the result is crystal clear. Wait.