

Brits lash out at Clinton for ending 'special relationship'

by Scott Thompson

Instead of their usual sleazy attacks upon President Bill Clinton, the British press and some of their Bush-league pals in the United States have recently launched a broader verbal assault against the United States as a whole, denouncing the "ingrateful colony" for abandoning its loyalty to "all things British."

The tone of nastiness and hysteria emanating from these City of London and Anglophile quarters suggests that there is growing recognition among the "friends of Windsor" that the break in the Anglo-American special relationship goes beyond President Clinton's personal animus toward British Prime Minister John Major, and reflects a more far-reaching re-thinking of U.S. foreign and economic policy.

We excerpt below some of the press smears of recent weeks:

Robert Zoellick, *"Mother Country No More, Britain is Still Special,"* the Wall Street Journal, April 8. Zoellick was an undersecretary of state and White House deputy chief of staff in the Bush administration:

... Commentators are again burying the special relationship. Rumors about strained personal ties between leaders, frictions over the Irish question and frustrations over Bosnia have roused writers on both sides of the Atlantic. ... It is fair to ask: Does the special relationship still matter? ...

The special relationship ... has upended Viscount Palmerston's caution: Nations can have perpetual friends and allies as well as interests. ... [But] if the special relationship seems to be fraying, the U.S. should be examining whether it is signaling clear and constant purpose.

"Britain and U.S. Hope Major Visit Will Heal Rifts," the London Independent, April 3, by Donald MacIntyre and Rupert Cornwell:

Anthony Lake, President Clinton's national security adviser, acknowledged at the weekend that anti-Americanism and criticism of Mr. Clinton were rife in Britain. ... "We see the press articles, I acknowledge it exists and we don't like it," Mr. Lake told a group of British correspondents on the eve of Mr. Major's visit. "We don't like it for two

reasons: one, it's nasty; and second, it's wrong."

"Friends in London," the Wall Street Journal, March 31, "Review & Outlook" editorial:

Wednesday's conference at the Royal Institute of International Affairs on Britain's global role was a strangely instructive event for anyone trying to figure out how London's view of itself and the world is developing these days. ... The Clinton team ... believes that "for better or worse," in the words of one senior U.S. diplomat, Germany is and will increasingly be the key decision-maker in Europe. Some in Washington have gone so far as to promote the idea of dumping close ties with Britain to opt instead for close ties with Germany. ...

Henry Kissinger, who attended the Chatham House bash, was correct to point out the sometimes negative impact of the Clinton administration's foreign policy. He highlighted in particular that the idea of anointing Germany as Europe's leader is a bad one—bad for Germany and bad for Europe. What's more, Germany doesn't want this role. ... Mr. Kissinger also wisely urged Britain to remain a player in the EU [European Union]. ... In other words, the EU needs Britain's Euro-skepticism.

The Clinton administration should consider the points raised by Mr. Kissinger. ... Instead of passing over Britain to consult with the EU (another name for Germany to the Clintonites) or lumbering into the middle of delicate matters like the Northern Ireland peace process, the Clinton administration should show how much it values having a strategic ally like Britain in Europe.

"The United States Is No Friend of Britain," London Sunday Telegraph, March 19, by John Charmley, who says, "America helped end the Empire and is now scuppering the United Kingdom."

The good thing about Mr. Clinton shaking the blood-stained paw of Gerry Adams last week is that it might finally destroy one of the most pernicious and damaging myths of recent British history—the notion that there is a special relationship between Britain and the United States.

Every concession made to America since 1940 has been justified by the claim that what was happening was not surrender but skillful harnessing of American power to our own uses: America's part in the Second World War and the Cold War seemed to prove the point. But the reality is that America has used her power ruthlessly to help dismantle the British Empire, both by direct action as at the time of Suez and by indirect action through the United Nations and the encouragement of every nationalist rabble-rouser (such as Gerry Adams) who shouted loudly enough. ...

As if this were not enough, the Americans have also taken the opportunity to erode British sovereignty and the unity of the United Kingdom itself, first by pressing us to join the United States of Europe, and now by pressing a hapless British government to sell our Unionist allies down the river with undue haste.