

THE PILGRIMS
SIR ROBERT WORCESTER'S REFLECTIONS LECTURE
26 JANUARY 2012

Admiral Lord Boyce: It's my great pleasure to introduce our guest speaker for this evening, who is going to deliver our annual *Reflections* Lecture, the 15th in the series. I know it is often said by someone doing the same sort of thing as I am at the moment, that "our speaker needs no introduction" – a well-used cliché. Well, never could this be more true than in the case of Bob Worcester. I cannot imagine anyone could be sitting here this evening who doesn't know the man who chaired The Pilgrims so ably for 17 years and always took great trouble to engage with all members of our Society. So Ladies and Gentlemen, I need say no more than "Here he is", well rested from the labours of looking after us, which he handed over some 18 months or so ago; and evidently not yet ground down by the main piece of work that he's picked up since of becoming the Chairman of the Magna Carta 800th Anniversary Committee. No doubt that will wear him down by the time of the great commemoration in 2015, whilst he still maintains his many other roles, including being Chancellor of the University of Kent.

Bob, we are absolutely delighted to have you with us once more, and we very much look forward to hearing your *Reflections* on the subject of *Special and Essential*.

Sir Robert Worcester: Thank you, the Pilgrims, for the honour of being your Chairman for the past 17 years. I have so enjoyed the privilege afforded me, appreciative of the genial and helpful guidance of the Pilgrims' Presidents I was pleased to serve, first Lord Carrington, from 1993 to 2002 and then Lord Inge, from then to when we both retired from office in 2010 to be replaced by Lord Boyce and Ron Freeman, who I must say have both hit the ground running and are showing real dedication to duty.

Also, I owe my sincere thanks to all the members of the Executive Committee who served during my chairmanship and especially my thanks to the Hon. Edward Streater, who persuaded me to consider taking on the chairmanship in the first place and then persuaded Peter Carrington to give me a try. Thanks too to Peter Barton who served as Honorary Secretary throughout my term, Jim Butler, Colin Sharman and Ian Barlow, my Honorary Treasurers, the Honorary Chaplains, the Right Reverends the late David Say and David Conner, the ever loyal Christopher Robson, Editor of the Pilgrims Newsletter, and certainly not to forget Mrs Micallef, Mrs Dennett and Mrs Wells, the three secretaries I worked with during my period of office. Nor to forget the membership, which has grown from the c. 700 when I began to serve to the nearly 1,100 today.

Many of you will have attended Jim Wolfensohn's speech to the Pilgrims last year. Some years earlier he recounted to me that he recalled vividly his first attendance as a guest at a Pilgrims' dinner, and thought to himself "If I ever get to give a speech to the Pilgrims, I will have arrived." Little then did he know what a magnificent career he would have, and little when I first was a guest at a Pilgrims' dinner did I think that I would ever become its Chairman, much less hold office for longer than any other chairman in over 100 years.

Certainly I did not think I would ever have the honour to be invited to give the 2012 *Reflections* Lecture.

But before I go any further, I want to bring to your attention the information a Pilgrim brought to my attention several years ago. There's a man in Brussels convinced that I am in the centre of the spider web of an international conspiracy. His work intrigued me when I found it on the web. It seems that in becoming Chairman of the Pilgrims I had taken on a very powerful role indeed. No doubt that's why Lord Sheffield knew so much about me.

It seems that to quote this chap, and there's more, much more, on a web site I've just discovered, "*The Pilgrims organization is a cluster of intermarried old-line rich, Royals and robber barons who have created the world's financial structure.*"¹

And he goes on, and on, and on, about how powerful we are and how we conspire to run the world, and is joined by others who by association have uncovered just how we have among our membership, in Britain and in the US, the establishment of senior diplomats like Peter Carrington, Generals like Inge, Guthrie and Bramall, Admirals too Mike. In America too, with wealth like David Rockefeller, business and Wall Street barons, and together the Pilgrims plot, in secret, to take over the world. I must be living proof of how secret this establishment network is. Seventeen years, and I never knew it was going on around me.

Seriously, I think back over those 17 years, and a few among many memorable functions especially stand out: my very first dinner in the chair with over 300 Pilgrims and guests at Mansion House in the presence of the Lord Mayor and the Sheriffs with Lady Brittain seated at the head table, our then living link to the key Founder of the Society, Sir Harry Brittain, in whose name we founded the annual Sir Harry Brittain Memorial Lecture series; our Centennial dinner in 2002 when again at the Mansion House with over 300 gathered in white tie, reliving the custom of the first sixty years of Pilgrim Dinners; the receptions with our Patron, Her Majesty The Queen, with some 700 Pilgrims and their partners present at each occasion; and also the traditional dinners welcoming the new American Ambassador, the latest, Ambassador Louis Susman, who in his first formal address² after his visit to the Palace to present his credentials (as has every incoming American Ambassador to the Court of St. James's for some 100 years) spoke forcefully, with the authority of the President, of commitment and dedication to the Special Relationship, the principal subject of my lecture this evening.

In preparation for this *Reflections* I reviewed our centennial history, researched for weeks in the extensive and comprehensive archives of the Pilgrims, then stored at Allington Castle, containing letters from Presidents Truman and Eisenhower, Nixon and Reagan, Churchill, Atlee, Eden, Macmillan, Thatcher, Blair, and other politicians, statesmen, diplomats, military leaders, captains of industry and academics of note, membership booklets, photographs of speakers and copies of their speeches of the many outstanding men and women (the first after-dinner speech ever of the Queen

¹ Savoie, Charles, The Pilgrims Society, December 2004, <http://www.wikispooks.com/wiki/File:Pilgrims.pdf>

² September 16th. 2009.

Mother was to the Pilgrims), including the first formal address of every United States Ambassador to the Court of St. James's for over 100 years. We owe a tribute to our intrepid researcher first and then author, Anne Pimlott Baker, who not only is responsible for the history of the British Pilgrims on its 100th anniversary, but also of the American Pilgrims a year later, in 2003, its centennial. I commend them to you.

The Pilgrims Reflections Lectures

Among the several initiatives during my two decades of office, first as programme committee chairman and then the 17 years as chairman, I might relate to you the story of the birth of these series of *Reflections* lectures.

I have for some forty years been an active participant in weekend seminars at Ditchley, the Anglo-American legacy of our fellow Pilgrim the late Sir David Wills and Lady Wills. Getting on 20 years ago, when I was chairman of the Pilgrims' Programme Committee, I was at the Ditchley AGM and on the Sunday morning came down early to read the Sunday papers. The only other person up early and sitting in the reception room was the late, legendary, Lord Sheffield.

I didn't think when I came into the room that Lord Sheffield even knew who I was. He looked up from his paper and said "Hm, Worcester..., sit down". I sat. "Going to chair the Pilgrims I hear," he said. "My Lord", I replied, "there are only three people who know that, and you're not one of them". "Well, I try to keep my ear to the ground, tell me about yourself." Soon as I could, I shifted him away from me to himself.

Then 89, he 'reflected' on his life for the next half hour, a man who had been the British Ambassador in Washington just after the war, then Deputy Under Secretary of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Joint Permanent Secretary of the Treasury, Chairman of the British Atomic Energy Authority, of ICFC (forerunner of 3i), of Hill Samuel, Wells Fargo Bank, Imperial College, Chairman of Ditchley, Chancellor of Reading University (as later was Lord Carrington), Fellow of All Souls and of the Royal Society.

As the room filled and as others awaited the gong signalling breakfast, I ventured to say that I'd been privileged to have the time with him to learn his thoughts about his life, and suggested that he share them with the current Pilgrims, to which he agreed. Thus began this series of lectures.

The recitation of his illustrious career makes me wonder what I'm doing up here tonight; especially when I think of the giants of politics, of finance, of journalism, and others who have 'Reflected' over the years.

But to the heart of my talk this evening. I have certainly hundreds if not thousands of times explained when others have asked about the Society that it has only one object: "the furtherance of Anglo-American good fellowship", and so now as one of the principal custodians of the 'Special Relationship', let me describe it in the words of President Obama as: "Special *and* Essential".

To quote first from Ambassador Susman's speech to the Pilgrims: *"In war and peace, in prosperity and in time of economic hardship, America has no better friend and no more dependable ally than the United Kingdom."*

And again: *"Our nations are deeply rooted in our enduring values of democracy, rule of law and tolerance; a shared history, culture and language, and a mutual ability and willingness to bring real diplomatic, financial and military assets to the table for joint action to promote and defend our common interests."*

And finally: *"While the United States of America – and this Ambassador – has many priorities – my principal priority will be to strengthen and nourish this special relationship – which is so critical to the United States."*

In a joint newspaper article on 24 May 2011, President Obama and Prime Minister Cameron pointed to the close relationship between our two countries, and said it is vital not just for Britain and America, but also the rest of the world. They wrote:

"When the United States and Britain stand together, our people and people around the world can become more secure and more prosperous."

"And that is the key to our relationship. Yes, it is founded on a deep emotional connection, by sentiment and ties of people and culture. But the reason it thrives, the reason why this is such a natural partnership, is because it advances our common interests and shared values."

*"It is a perfect alignment of what we both need and what we both believe. And the reason it remains strong is because it delivers time and again. Ours is not just a **special** relationship, it is an **essential** relationship – for us and for the world."*

On the following day, in President Obama's address to both Houses of Parliament, after the introductory pleasantries, the first point the President made was this: *"Our relationship is special because of the values and beliefs that have united our people throughout the ages. Centuries ago, when kings, emperors, and warlords reigned over much of the world, it was the English who first spelled out the rights and liberties of man in Magna Carta."³*

Pause, and think a moment.

Here was the President of the United States giving one of the defining speeches of his Presidency about human rights and the rule of law, and his very first point of reference is his reference to the special relationship, with its roots in the Magna Carta sealed at Runnymede on 15th June 1215, nearly 800 years ago.

From the start of the last century, certainly recognised in the 1902 founding of the Pilgrims, the Anglo-American 'special relationship' has been in force, no matter how often denied in the media and the occasional politician or diplomat. No two countries have worked together before in a passage of

³ 10 June 2011, Lord McNally, Minister of Justice, Lincoln Cathedral Magna Carta address

world power, handed over with remarkably little acrimony as economic strength and changing situations and relationships with other nations, especially the Commonwealth, forced the transfer.

For some reason these things go in waves. During the last year of Labour in power, it seemed that derision of the special relationship became obligatory, it was a litany, e.g. Rachel Sylvester in *The Times* argued that since fewer than 5% of Americans knew who Gordon Brown was (when he was Prime Minister) proved that my two countries have fallen out of love, as did a TV clip of Obama giving David Miliband a big hello at the same time “snubbing” Brown, and the unfortunate gaff by the President in replacing the bust of Prime Minister Churchill in the oval office with one of President Lincoln. Whenever there was something to do with the US in the news, the British media seemed to feel the need to report that the “special relationship” was dead.

It really doesn't matter much in my view if John Doe in America or Joe Bloggs in Britain have heard of Brown or not, the strength of the “Special Relationship” is not measured by the views of the hard hat from Dayton or a taxi driver in Bradford.

In his Eccles Centre speech in 2009, Jon Snow said that his argument rested on the belief that the current special relationship is really centred on a romanticised view of history, consolidated by the pressure of war, and finally wrapped in mythology. It no longer exists, he said.

Jon, I've got news for you, and Rachel, a message.

The Special Relationship depends on solid bonds in four key areas, **diplomatic, defence and intelligence, nuclear** and **business**. These are all in very good shape now – and for the foreseeable future, no matter these ‘inside the beltway/chattering class’ stories.

Fellow Pilgrim Sir Jeremy Greenstock said as much on *Newsnight* when Director of Ditchley. Most current and former British Ambassadors, whether they've served in America or not, will tell you the same, and that while recognising that Britain is the junior partner, they'd a lot rather Britain to be in alliance with the USA than not.

There is no question either that when you speak with one of Britain's top military commanders, Navy, Army, or RAF they all endorse its importance. They know their opposite numbers, many have served with American forces, and all of them hold the defence special relationship in high regard. This is true not only on this side of the Atlantic; it's also true in America.

There was no stronger advocate of this than the former Chairman of the American Joint Chiefs of Staff, the late Admiral William Crowe, Ambassador to the Court of St James's. Ambassador Crowe was living proof of the high regard with which both the American diplomatic and military at the highest level regard the contribution made by Britain not just to partnering with the United States but also the contribution that Britain makes to the United Nations, its Security Council, the G7/G20 and to the world.

Our universities are respected by their educators as are our scientists. Of the latest ‘top world universities’ the UK came second only to the USA in the

number of universities in the top 100, and had five in the top ten. We are not as rich, that's for sure, but in the clichéd phrase Britain certainly punches above its weight in education and science and in demonstrating British values shared with the American establishment. After all, Americans learned them from its British colonists.

So what is the "Special Relationship"?

- What it is: The relationship between two nations
- What it is not: Exclusive
- What it should be: Plural⁴
- What it does not have to be: Comprehensive
- What it must be: Flexible
- What it is defined as by the President of the United States, Barak Obama: "Essential"

There are arguments for it.

1. **Constitutional and Legal:** The Rule of Law, the cusp between retributive justice and codified justice was first expressed in England during the rule of King Aethelbert of Kent, c. 604, recorded in the *Textus Roffensis*, in the Coronation Oath of Henry I in 1100, in the Magna Carta of 1215 wherein the Rule of Law and Human Rights, if not universal, became, in 1297, the law of the land.
2. **Political:** Who here is not interested in the American election this year? Hands up? Not a one, and this is approximately the 48th audience in this country, from 6th formers and university undergraduates to Rotary clubs, I've asked for a hand's up, and have yet to have a single admission of boredom with American Presidential contests. Why is the British – American All-Party Parliamentary Group the largest cross-party/Commons and Lords committee of its type? Why are there people in this country, some four in ten, who express little interest in our elections who say they are very interested in what's happening in America?
3. **Financial:** The USA and the UK are each other's largest investor country; the US is the UK's top export destination; the US is our second largest trading partner.
4. **Linguistic:** When the intrepid voyagers founded the first permanent English-speaking colony in Jamestown, Virginia, in 1607 (13 years before the Mayflower), there were just about two million people who spoke English, almost all in the British Isles and in the Caribbean; now over a billion speak our language, on the way to two billion by 2020, a thousand-fold increase in 400 years.

⁴ It is generally thought that Churchill first described the 'Special Relationship' in his Fulton, Missouri, speech in March 1946 when he then spoke **about 'a special relationship between the British Commonwealth and Empire and the United States'**, but in fact it was used in November 1945, quoted in the New York Times Herald when he said, "***We should not abandon our special relationship with the United States and Canada about the atomic bomb...***"

5. **Cultural:** Each of our countries are each other's biggest market for TV and cinema production and distribution, there are more auction houses, more exchanges of theatre, opera, classical and rock concerts; even country & western than any other two countries, and of course, we are the countries of the largest publishers of books, magazines and scholarly articles in English.
6. **Historic:** Partly because of cinema and TV, and also books, our peoples take a keen interest in each others' political, military, and cultural histories. I know one MP who knows more about the American Indian tribes than any American I know, and another person, a Judge, who certainly knows more, much more, about the American Civil War than I do.
7. **Educational:** The most sought after educational exchanges in terms of both students and faculty are UK to US, and US to the UK.
8. **Journalistic:** The elites in the USA and the UK are each other's largest readers of each other's newspapers.

And now, time to quote Winston Churchill, as with so many, a product of an Anglo-American relationship: *"In the days to come the British and American peoples will for their own safety and for the good of all, walk together side by side in majesty, in justice, and in peace."*⁵

And former US Ambassador Robert Tuttle's speech to the Pilgrims on his departure⁶:

"President Obama's first call to a European leader was to Gordon Brown, it went extremely well and it started off with Barack and Gordon, and the President talked about his interest in the continuing special relationship."

"We have about between 18,000 and 20,000 official visitors a year -- that is Federal, State and local officials. Some come with a transient point, some come to give speeches, some come to talk to the media, not me. But most of them come and meet with their counterparts in your government. That is how important this relationship is. That is how deep and strong this relationship is, and it is going to continue."

Foreign Secretary William Hague when Shadow Foreign Secretary on a more personal, more evocative, notes: *"We British politicians love American politics. My wife hates it when we are travelling through America when I say 'Do you know we are going through a county which voted 73% Republican at the last election, and we are about to cross the border into one that is quite marginal in the next election, and she thinks I have completely taken leave of my senses"*

Looking Back

Let's take a minute to look back over the past 100 or so years. President Theodore Roosevelt rather undiplomatically distinguished between 'real'

⁵ Churchill's address to joint meeting of Congress, December 26, 1941

⁶ September 14, 2005

Americans and 'hyphenated Americans' (Italian-Americans, Irish-Americans, and so on), and Henry Cabot Lodge argued that Americans of British descent had contributed three times as much to American abilities as all the others combined.

However chequered Anglo-American diplomatic relations had been in the nineteenth century, there was a strong feeling among Americans of English ancestry that the two nations shared not only a common language, but common ideals, and that there was a need to assert their Anglo-Saxon heritage.

These sentiments were repeated at many early in the last century at Pilgrims functions: on his return from Washington, at the dinner in his honour on 6th November 1913, British Ambassador to the US James Bryce declared that the friendship of the two countries rested on 'community of language, of literature, of institutions, of traditions, of ideals, of all those memories of the past which are among the most precious possessions of the two nations'.

The first dinner in New York was held at the Waldorf Astoria on 4th February, 1903, the year following the founding of the British Pilgrims, to welcome Admiral Lord Charles Beresford, close friend of King Edward VII, and later a vice-president of the American Pilgrims. Soon after this dinner, King Edward VII and President Theodore Roosevelt gave permission for the Pilgrims to couple the King and the President in a single toast, and it became the custom, immediately after the toast, for the orchestra to play a few bars of 'God Save the King' and the 'Star-Spangled Banner', now a custom sadly lost along with the orchestral accompaniment to white tie dinners.

The Special Relationship has never been without rough edges, as with the reluctance of both President Wilson and Roosevelt to enter into European wars too soon, to the dismay of the beleaguered British. Certainly Churchill not only felt his maternal 'special relationship' existed, but between the governments and peoples as well, as did Macmillan.

Other rough edges included the tenure of the immediate pre-war American Ambassador Joseph Kennedy who did much to irritate his host country, but the affinity clearly shown by his son when in the Presidency for his 1,000 days strengthened the relationship and softened any lingering recall of the actions and words of his father. It reached a nadir in 1956 at the time of the Suez Crisis.⁷

On the other side, continuing the tradition of outspoken 'diplomats', was Lord Halifax, who in 1941 when sent to represent Britain in America described the thought of going to Washington as 'odious', and who told Baldwin "I have never liked Americans, except odd ones (sic). In the mass, I have always found them dreadful." Later he reported to the King that he found Americans "very much resemble a mass of nice children - a little crude, very warm-hearted and mainly governed by emotion." He claimed to be unable to understand the American system of government, which he likened to "a disorderly day's rabbit shooting".

⁷ Kennedy-Pipe, Caroline, *Society Now*, Autumn 2009, p. 17.

Certainly Churchill did much to cement the special relationship, spending weeks at a time as Roosevelt's guest in the White House during the war, and treating the American's envoys as 'one of us'. Both during and following the war he attended meetings of the cabinet in Washington, and clearly wished the relationship to work as closely in peace as in war. He instructed his chief scientific advisor as early as 1940 to tell the Americans "*everything* that Britain was doing in the scientific field", and joint military operations were as seamless as could be, in intent, if not always in practice, given the extraordinary personalities on both sides.

It was Churchill who commented, to Field Marshal Lord Alanbrooke, that there was only one thing worse than fighting with allies, and that was fighting without them⁸. He spoke at a Pilgrims dinner in 1932 about the special relationship, saying whatever problems faced the two nations, "*I believe that there is one grand valiant conviction shared on both sides of the Atlantic. It is this: together, there is no problem we cannot solve.*"

Prime Minister Churchill, took over from Chamberlain in May 1940, and spoke again to the Pilgrims the following year⁹: "*The future of the whole world and the hopes of a broadening civilisation founded upon Christian ethics depend upon the relations between the British Empire...and of the United States of America. The identity of purpose and persistence of resolve prevailing thought the English-speaking world will more than any other single fact determine the way of life that will be open to the generations, and perhaps to the centuries, which follow our own...We stand therefore – all of us – upon the watchtowers of history.*"

9/11

During the first few days following the events of 9/11 thousands of mourners left flowers in front of the American Embassy in London in an outpouring of solidarity, and some 50,000 British subjects and others signed the book of condolence for the dead and injured of the WTC, Pentagon and in the hijacked aeroplanes. Within a few days results of opinion polls were published as well, reporting the findings of systematic and objective measurements of the attitudes of the British people. These findings showed a high level of support for the efforts of U.S. President George W. Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair, and a realisation that the War against Terrorism could be long and lead to further loss of British lives. Margaret and I were in Austin, Texas, where I'd lectured to the British Studies Group at the University of Texas the day before 9/11. We expected to fly back on 9/11, through Washington, to London. Margaret saw more of East Texas that week than she ever expected, as we had to rent a car, fly to Houston, where there were direct flights to London.

The following week when we got back, I was lunching with Peter Carrington who asked: "Were we (the British) on American television?". I replied that we had little to do except watch TV both at the motel and at the airport awaiting the skies to reopen, and, typically, I was switching between about five

⁸ Worcester, Robert, Book Review of '*Fighting with Allies*' by Sir Robin Renwick in *Europe-Atlantic Journal*, October 1996

⁹ January 9th, 1941

channels, and that there wasn't an hour on any of them that there wasn't reference to the Star Spangled Banner being played by the Guards Band at Buckingham Palace, or to the service at St. Paul's, or to the thousands queuing at the American Embassy to sign the books of condolence, broadcasting vox pops with the Brits who were expressing solidarity with their American cousins.

Sir Simon Jenkins, giving the Douglas W. Bryant Lecture at the Eccles Centre at the British Library, entitled if you can believe it *Anti-Americanism in the 21st Century*¹⁰ recalled giving a lecture in 1996 at the American Embassy entitled *Why I love America* at a time when he said, contentiously, "No-one seemed to love America then, least of all in Europe and least of all, certainly, in Tony Blair's supposedly left-wing England. Later in the lecture he quoted extensively from Pew Research Center's survey of global attitudes which 'showed favourable opinion of America collapsing, and yet quoted the figure that 56% of the British in the poll were pro-American. He did go on to say that 'the Pew survey, which I mentioned earlier, has partially corrected itself or maybe reflected a change of opinion following the election in 2008 of America's first black president Barack Obama.'

As it happens, I too looked at the Pew data in preparing my speech to the ESU's International Conference in Paris in 2009, entitled *The Image of America Abroad*¹¹. In it I made a similar point to Simon's that the image of a country isn't necessarily the image of a place to go on holiday, or appreciate its music, its literature, certainly not its people, and that it wasn't a 'correction' in Britain, **or anywhere else**, but certainly was a change in the view of citizens of most of the countries in the Pew surveys, and certainly in the UK, as well as in the other European countries.

In preparing my 2009 speech I dug deeper than Simon did a year later, looking at Pew's testing public opinion of "America" and "Americans" in some 20 countries, finding a 23% across the 20 countries who recorded a different attitude between the two words, with only two letters but a world of perceptions difference. Further I looked at the perceptions in Britain in even deeper contrast in Britain: in 2008, the British Pew data found that there was a +16 (53% favourable v. 37% unfavourable) while if asked whether their attitude to the United States was favourable or unfavourable, while the same contrast asking about Americans was a +70.

In 2011, the good folks at Pew found that while 61% of the British had a favourable view of the U.S., 73% said they had a favourable view of Americans. It wasn't that 27% did not, for some of course responded with a 'don't know'.

What about Tomorrow?

Sandra Kaiser, former Minister-Counsellor for Public Affairs at the American Embassy in London, last year spoke on this topic, saying "*The special*

¹⁰ Jenkins, Sir Simon, '*Anti-Americanism in the 21st Century*' The Eccles Centre for American Studies, 17 May 2010.

¹¹ Worcester, Sir Robert. 'The Image of America Abroad', 20 October 2009

relationship is one of those evergreen topics that falls dormant, only to spring up again. Wherever you go back in our shared history, it seems, the special relationship has been declared dead and buried – only to resurface, very much alive and well.”

My own Conclusions? A final word from Churchill:

As he was retiring as Prime Minister in 1955, his advice to his colleagues was two-fold: *“Man is Spirit,”* he said, -- and *“Never be separated from the Americans.”*¹²

Good advice then, good advice now.

But I would add advice to ‘our’ friends in America: ***Never be separated from the British. In good times and bad, we’re your best friends in the world.***

But I say no more that Barak Obama did last year¹³ when he said to the newly-elected Prime Minister David Cameron: *“The United States has no closer friend and ally than the United Kingdom. I reiterate my deep and personal commitment to the special relationship between our two countries – a bond that has endured for generations and across party lines, and that is essential to the security and prosperity of our two countries, and the world.”*

Thank you.

Peter Johnson: What do you think of the break-up of the United Kingdom?

RMW: I mentioned that American elections are sometimes pretty silly and I would reflect now, perhaps wearing my British hat, that I think this is pretty silly. I did a Tweet - my colleagues at the company said about two years ago that I had to get on Twitter and about three months ago I was being interviewed on the BBC, on Radio 4, it was the time of the party conferences actually, and he said “I see you are on Twitter, you don’t seem to use it very much, you have Tweeted once in two years”. So I am shamed into Tweeting a bit more.

I did pick up my Tweet machine, so to speak, the other day when Alex Salmond was speaking and saying that the question is “Would you agree that Scotland should be an independent country” or words to that effect, and I Tweeted out to the people who follow me and then put it on the British Politics Group Internet Group as well, to the academics in our field, and I said “Any serious pollster would know that was indeed a biased question”, it is “do you agree **or disagree** that Scotland should be an independent country”. I think it is ill-judged myself.

You could almost see it coming. Going back to the days in the '70s when David Owen was Foreign Secretary and Jim Callaghan was Prime Minister, in fact even before that, because Harold Wilson used me to batter Willie Ross

¹² Meacham, John, *Franklin and Winston: An intimate Portrait of an Epic Friendship*, Random House, 2003, p. 29

¹³ 11 May 2010

around the ears about the threat of the SNP and the threat to the country. I was with the Prime Minister, Mr Callaghan in No.10 for an hour between 5.00pm and 6.00pm on Monday evening, and I went home and was sitting there for dinner and *World in Action* was on the television. Mr Callaghan was on live, which he hadn't mentioned to me. Ludovic Kennedy was the interviewer and he said this poll showed the Labour Party at that time three points ahead and it was too close to comfort. The Prime Minister, who'd spent an hour with me going over all these polls, said "I look at them out of interest but I don't pay a lot of attention to them". I thought, gosh, what a hypocrite. Of course I couldn't say that then, but I can say it now. Twenty minutes later they came round to Scotland, and it was 1978 I think, and Ludovic Kennedy said "And what about the separatist movement in Scotland?" Mr Callaghan's very smooth response was, "Everybody knows that only 20% of Scots are in favour of separatism".

Unfortunately it is higher now, but there are promises that I hear being made that I don't see how it could possibly be delivered, and I really worry about it. They think they are going to be folded into the EU and clearly they are not, the Euro and all of that, so I would be very reluctant to see the break-up of the United Kingdom.

Alan Tritton: As somebody who's been connected with the Falkland Islands for sixty years, and has worked there, would Obama support us against the Argentineans?

RMW: Well I certainly hope so. I had very close friends who did not understand at all about why we were down in the Falklands defending at the time of the Falklands War and I was vociferous in my defence of it and I said, "Because they are British, they are not Argentineans". There was no one there when the British settled there, it wasn't Argentinean then, it was just a bare island, which you would know much better than I. I don't know if you know, but I was commissioned by a group of businessmen in Buenos Aires to carry out a poll in the Falklands. Ben Page, the current country manager and another of my chaps, went down there to carry out this poll. It was amazing the network, because the Attorney General rang I think a day after we began our interviews wanting to know why hadn't he been interviewed, he was just as good as anybody else and he wanted to be interviewed as well. I was having breakfast three weeks after the poll was released with the then Minister of State in the Foreign Office who was responsible for the relationship to the Falklands, subsequent to that, and he said, "there is this story going round the Foreign Office that you've been carrying out a poll in the Falklands and I wondered who the sponsor is" and I said, "It's a group of businessmen in Buenos Aires who approached me, one of them knew me, and if you wanted to know three weeks ago why didn't you ring me?" He said, "I didn't want them to know I knew you that well". The thing I take most pride in is that then we were commissioned by the Falkland Islanders to carry out a poll in Great Britain because they thought we had been so fair and nobody argued with the results, and it was very unfavourable - and in the public domain - to the Argentines. I wouldn't have expected that question, I must say, but then there aren't very many people who would have someone with 60 years' Falklands experience in the audience.

Ian Barlow: You have been here for many decades. What's kept you here and what motivated you to become a British citizen?

RMW: I came over on a four-year contract, and the reason I came here was my heritage. When I took my Margaret as my prospective bride to meet my only living relative, my old blind aunt in Kansas City, 30 years ago, she told Margaret something I'd never heard her say, that she could remember me at three years of age saying I was going to live in London sometime during my life. I have no recollection of that whatsoever, the only thing I knew about London was it was the biggest City in the world. I thought, that's for me. And with a name like Worcester I was given an honorary degree at Warwick last week, and at the dinner the night before I asked Margaret to bring up a tome from the country, the Worcester genealogy, published in 1914, which I found in a bookshop in Boston in 1967, it was \$40, I will never forget that, I just about didn't have \$40 but I had to have that genealogy and I remembered there was some history in it about my English ancestors and sure enough they were in Warwickshire in the 14th and 15th centuries. So I read out a little bit of that last week to the audience, and said as Chancellor of the University of Kent, which Mike mentioned before, it is always a good help if you are nominating somebody to get an honorary degree at the University of Kent to have an association with Kent, and it was very remarkable that they had done their homework so well that they had found out I had had ancestors that were living in Warwickshire in the 14th and 15th century and that was the reason they were giving me an honorary degree.

Why I have stayed? In my first year I was lucky enough to have as clients, the two that I had really set my cap on, Shell and ICI, because having come from McKinsey and Co, and I petitioned them to be transferred to their London office, but they wouldn't send me to the London office, I worked at their offices in New York and Washington and had clients in both, they wouldn't send me to London because they were repatriating the Yanks that they had sent over to set up the office here in the first place, three or four years earlier. When I had the opportunity to go elsewhere, to be the Chief Financial Officer of a research company, knowing nothing about research, I said to the Chairman, before I agreed to be hired, what they wanted me to do as CFO would take me three or four years and then they were going to be ready to go to Europe and I wanted to head it up. He said "Why?" and I said, "Because I've always wanted to live in London for three or four years sometime during my lifetime". But in my first year I had as my clients Lloyds Bank and Barclays Bank and Midland Bank, and the new National Westminster Bank, from the merger of National Provincial and Westminster Bank. I had British Leyland and Dunlop and ICI and Shell and Mobil and Esso and all the major companies. In fact my very first client was a study for the British government, for Lord Brown at the Board of Trade. When I came towards the end of my four-year contract, I thought I can go back, but one of my staff had taken over as Chief Financial Officer and by that time I was pretty well known as a researcher in Britain and edited the Consumer Market Research Handbook, so I was a guru in the field. I thought "I am having such a good time here I think I'll stay", and I am certainly glad I did.

Admiral Lord Boyce: Thank you very much indeed for answering those questions, Bob, and they were some true 'reflections'; and it is my very

pleasant duty now to thank you on behalf of all for your excellent *Reflections* lecture. Bob, you know and I know that you are preaching to the converted here tonight when talking about the Special Relationship. I can't believe there is anybody here that doesn't believe that it is very special and it is essential. But it has been so good to have our arguments for that refreshed and renewed and readily honed for such times that we have to engage with the unbelievers. I am sure that, like me, everybody was particularly fascinated by your story about the website which contains perceptions that some web crawlers have of our society. We all know, or guess anyway, that you are actually really the centre of a spider web of international conspiracy or something, there's no news there! But we are all going to be dashing home tonight to get onto the internet to see if we get a mention there!

We also equally enjoyed your examples of *Special and Essential*, reflecting ourselves on some of the names that you conjured up, great men that you call to mind, who over time have worked so hard to burnish the relationship. From my own experience, I can certainly endorse what you had to say about the strong ties that bind our militaries together in UK and USA.

In all, Bob, it was a most timely and comprehensive exposition on a subject that we all hold dear and we are most grateful to you for all the research you did to compose such a thoughtful collection of Reflections. And, not that there was any doubt I am sure in any of our minds, but picking up your quote from Jim Wolfensohn, "if I ever have to give a speech to the Pilgrims I'll have arrived", well, you've definitely arrived; but I think we can all agree you did that a long time ago, and tonight all you have done is to underline such credentials. Thank you very much indeed.

On behalf of us all, as clearly you have a tie and a book and everything, may I give you this? It's a small memento and it is probably your first Diamond Jubilee present in this great year that is coming up. I hope you enjoy it.

RMW: Thank you very much.

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