

# OUR FORMER COUP CLIENT SPEAKS

As I've said before, one of the best ways to see the absurd nature of the relationship between our government and BP as they partner to try to fix BP's disaster is to remember that fifty-some years ago, the CIA overthrew the democratically elected government of Iran because it had nationalized BP's facilities.

I invite you to think about that fact while you read this exchange with BP's CEO Tony Hayward from the Beeb's Andrew Marr Show.

ANDREW MARR:

What happens if, as a lot of American politicians are talking about, the US government takes control of BP or at least BP's American operations? Is that plausible? Is that possible?

TONY HAYWARD:

I think you know what we're doing is focusing on the response. We're absolutely focused on the response. I think it's for the US authorities to determine what they wish to do. All I can say is that we're working hand in hand with the US authorities. I am talking all the time with Secretaries Chu, Salazar, Thad Allen, the incident commander to deal with the response.

ANDREW MARR:

Do you feel you're being unfairly treated by the American political system and the media given where we are in the electoral cycle?

TONY HAYWARD:

I think it's understandable when something of this scale occurs with this sort of environmental impact – the

impact it's had on the Gulf Coast – that people are angry and frustrated and emotional. It's a perfectly reasonable thing. And you know I'm angry and frustrated and you know ...

ANDREW MARR:

I mean no British company has been on the receiving end of American presidential anger like this I think ever before. That and the possibility of some political action and criminal action against the company has led people to start to ask whether BP itself is going to survive this.

TONY HAYWARD:

BP's a very strong company. Its operations today are running extremely well. It's generating a lot of cash flow. It has a very strong balance sheet. Our reputation has been based on thousands of people over a long period of time in BP doing the right thing, and we are doing everything we can to do the right thing. We are going to stop the leak. We're going to clean up the oil. We're going to remediate any environmental damage and we are going to return the Gulf Coast to the position it was in prior to this event. That's an absolute commitment, and we will be there long after the media has gone making good on our promises.

ANDREW MARR:

And once you've done all of that, will you be paying the dividend to your investors?

TONY HAYWARD:

We're going to take care of all of our stakeholders.

Don't worry, Hayward told his British audience.

The US won't take over BP (or even its US operations). Nothing the US will do will prevent us from paying our dividend on time.

You see, the US can take over a country to serve BP's interests. But it would be absurd, Hayward clearly believes, to think the US would take over BP to serve its own people.