

September 29, 2007

## *Sidebar*

### **Brainy Solutions**

I **Two articles.** In the *New York Times* (9/16/07) “two” articles appeared involving National Security and the next election. One contained partisan political criticism (the popular “hate Bush” agenda) and the other offered a vision for Democrat aspirants. Under fire, we need to stop partisan accusations when debating national security issues. *America must be safe!* We must get into the habit of being constructive (“being intelligent”) in dealing with the safety of our country. It is easy (sometimes stupid) to damn a policy without offering solutions. It is easy (sometimes abject) to excoriate a tactic without offering a better one. It is easy (sometimes wrong) to exploit antiwar sentiments. Is that “brainy” in the face of a nutty Jihad and Iran’s nuke efforts? I do not think so. What say you?

II **The articles.** Let us take a look at the *two* articles. First, Frank Rich wrote that General David Petraeus (our general in Iraq) could not state that we were safer. (If the general were President Bush’s mouthpiece, he would not have made that perturbing statement.) No one knows if we are safer. All our security forces can do is do their best to keep us safe (at home). Mr. Rich referred to other writings from Michael Scheuer and Lisa Myers. Both implied that (after 9/11) Al Qaeda got stronger. Protected in Pakistan and training in Afghanistan (making bombs to attack America). *Note: they did not say that Al Qaeda was in the homeland.* Are these remarks mere *ipsi dixit*? Also, Mr. Rich quoted Frances Townsend (a White House security official): “Bin Laden ... is virtually impotent.” Does she know this for a fact? Where is Bin Laden, Ms. Townsend? Mr. Rich continues: “Our situation [in Iraq] is graver than it was during Vietnam.” Really? I agree if he is referring to “nutty” Jihad. Mr. Rich concluded: “People realize that the president’s real “plan for victory” is to let his successor clean up the mess.” (A mischaracterization of President Bush’s strategy.) I was expecting a list of intelligent solutions: (1) How to resolve the Iraq crisis. (2) How to stop a nuclear Iran. (3) How to capture Bin Laden. (4) How to stop Jihad Unfortunately, nothing (*nada*) was written—no *brainy solutions* were written. The second article, written by Thomas Friedman, was smarter. (It provided some *brainy solutions* for Democrats.) I liked his several “wild cards” for a Republican victory in 2008, to wit: “...if the Democrats [do not have] a credible approach to Iraq [I add, and Iran] and the wider national security issues facing the country...they need to articulate a concrete end game policy...a fixed withdrawal date...a stiff tariff on all imported crude oil...a plan to deal with the broader terrorist challenge [I add, they will lose].” Well, Mr. Friedman provides a list for a Democrat victory. Who (man or woman) will step up to home plate and hit a “home run” for victory against terrorism and an intelligent national security plan? That magnificent *person* will be our next president.