

September 27, 2011

To: Katonah Great Decisions Participants

From: Fred Piker – Discussion Leader

Re: Summary of 9/20/11 Meeting–Book Review–“The Next 100 Years” (Author: George Friedman)-Topic Leader: Howard Jacobs

10:15: KICKOFF

Welcome and Introduction of Guests

Welcome to guest Ed Elkin

Future 2011-12 Day Time Meeting Dates

10/4, 11/8, 12/6, 1/10/12, 1/24, 2/7, 3/6, 3/20, 4/3, 4/17, 5/1, 5/15

Schedule of Fall/Early Winter Daytime Meeting Topics

10/4 –“Middle East Realignment”- Topic Leader: Tyler Beebe

11/8 – “Global Public Service, Ethics, and the Role of the U. N.”
Co-Topic Leaders: Terri Sachs & Dimitri Argyriades

12/6-“The Atlantic Alliance – What’s the Future?”
Co-Topic Leaders: Joe Adams & Mike Kornfield
(Note-to provide more focus the title has been revised)

1/10/12-“Oil and the Balance of Power”
Co-Topic Leader: Charlie Kimball

2012 FPA Briefing Book Topics

A preliminary schedule of topic titles (without descriptors) was distributed. Later this year FPA will provide descriptors. The 2012 Briefing Books will be distributed during the first half of January.

Update – “The Katonah Chapter of the Great Decisions Program”

As mentioned in my 9/17 e-mail (“Great Decisions – About Us”), the Planning Committee has updated the document (first prepared in September 2010) which summarizes how our

Chapter works. The document is available on the Chapter web site (www.bedfordny.com)

Summary – 9/13 Planning Committee Meeting

Dick Ten Dyke's summary was recently distributed to Chapter participants.

2011-12 Chapter Fee & Ordering of 2012 FPA Briefing Books

For the fourth year in a row, the Annual Chapter Fee will remain the same - \$50 (single) - \$75 (couple). The fee includes the cost of the annual FPA Briefing Book, an administrative charge, and an allocation to KVL.

To take advantage of the “early bird” discount, prior to the end of October I will order the Chapter Briefing Books. If you plan to become a regular participant and want to receive a Briefing Book, please bring a check (made out to Fred K. Piker) or cash to the 10/4 meeting. Alternatively, you may mail a check to me – 23 Mustato Road – Katonah, NY 10536. FYI please review the attached schedule (“Great Decisions – 2012 Briefing Book Orders”) of those who have already ordered the 2012 Briefing Book.

Evening Foreign Policy Forums

As reported in the 9/13 Planning Committee notes, Charlie Kimball will spearhead the effort again this year.

Chapter Note Taker

Elizabeth Hall will prepare our discussion summaries again this year.

Chapter Website

In September, 2010 Dick Ten Dyke created our Chapter website (HYPERLINK "http://www.bedfordny.com" www.bedfordny.com) and maintained it during the past year. He will maintain it for the current year as well.

FYI yours truly reported recently I had been unable to access the website. As an AOL user, I called AOL Customer Service – then onto “Tech Support.” Eventually the Customer Service Rep solved the problem (whatever it was). If you are AOL user and are experiencing difficulty accessing the website, I suggest you contact AOL Customer Service.

GROUP DISCUSSION

CHAPTER MOTTO - “DISCUSSIONS SHOULD BE CONDUCTED WITHOUT

Topic Introduction

Initially Howard provided a brief overview of Friedman’s background as well as his book, including highlighting of his core statements. Additionally, Howard clarified the principles and practices of geopolitics and scenario planning. Subsequently, he led discussion on the questions listed below.

Preliminary Discussion Questions

1-Tom Friedman in an op ed piece in the 8/31/11 NY Times states that the “single most important trend in the world today is the fact that globalization and the information technology revolution has gone to a whole new level.” Has technology taken on a life of its own? Is it moving faster and in a direction than common sense may dictate? On the other hand, if you disagree with his nomination, what is your pick for the most consequential global trend right now that might defy human efforts at control or at least influence?

2-In 1970 Alvin Toffler noted in “Future Shock” that “The future arrives too soon and in the wrong order.” What is your sense of living in that future today?

3-Friedman believes that conflict cannot be eliminated from the human condition. In 1932 the League of Nations asked Albert Einstein to choose a problem of interest to him and to exchange views with someone about it. Einstein chose, “Is there any way of delivering mankind from the menace of war?” He invited Sigmund Freud to reply. Suppose you were his correspondent today. Looking ahead to the 21st century as forecast by Friedman, what is your answer?

4-In light of the vast potential of natural gas and oil deposits on this continent, what are the global economic and political implications if North America in the 21st century, becomes the world capital of energy resources?

5-The UN projects that over the next 40 years, more than half (58%) of the world’s population growth will come from increases in the number of people over 60, while the number of children under 5 will be in steep decline. Moreover, a significant percentage of this aging population will be found in urban areas. What do you foresee as the consequences of this predicted demographic profile in the context of a world in a state of permanent migration?

6-We have been given a highly detailed and lengthy mid-century scenario forecasting a new

kind of global – but something less than total – war, largely fought in space over the control of space, culminating in a treaty among the belligerents ceding the United States complete command of all commercial and military traffic in space. In your opinion, to what extent is this a plausible narrative? What interests you about this different future?

Participant Observations

Attached is Elizabeth Hall's summary of participant observations.

12:00 P. M.-ADJOURNMENT OF REGULAR MEETING AND COMMENCEMENT OF OPTIONAL CURRENT EVENTS MODULE

The Palestinian bid for statehood recognition at the U. N. dominated the discussion.

12:30 P. M. – WELCOME BACK LUNCHEON

Several participants dined at “Olivers” for the traditional “Welcome Back” luncheon.

Hope you can join us on 10/4.

Best regards,

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