Mullings

An American Cyber-Column

Obama’s Smart War

Thursday, September 25, 2014

* My personal bible of modern political thought is, of course, the Hollywood Reporter.
* The HR (as we entertainment insiders like to call it) ran a piece detailing the celebrities who are against going to war. Among them are:

Michael Moore

Rosie O’Donnell

The Dixie Chicks (at least one of them)

Susan Sarandon

Tim Robbins

Sean Penn

**Martin Sheen**

**Kim Basinger**

**Matt Damon**

**Laurence Fishburne**

E**than Hawke**

**Uma Thurman**

**Samuel L. Jackson**

**Jessica Lange**

Dustin Hoffman

Richard Gere

* There were others, but you get the drift.
* The Hollywood Reporter ran that story on March 19, 2013, the 10th anniversary of the 2003 invasion of Iraq.
* I may have missed the finger wagging under President Obama’s nose by some of the military geniuses on that list, but I’m not staying up late to hear their theories on why this war is better than the 2003 invasion.
* On Oct. 2, 2002, Senator Barack Obama said in a major speech in Chicago that “I am not opposed to all wars. I'm opposed to dumb wars.”
* By definition, then, this must be a “smart war.”
* He said, at that time that the Iraq war was a “cynical attempt by political hacks like Karl Rove to distract us from a rise in the uninsured, a rise in the poverty rate, a drop in the median income …”

SIDEBAR

It seem to me that the notion of a man whose every dime has been earned in and/or around politics calling someone else a “political hack” is, at a minimum disingenuous but, I’m on a roll so let’s go to the video tape.

END SIDEBAR

* In 2002, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, the poverty rate in the United States was 11.7 percent representing 32.9 million Americans.
* In 2013, the same Census Bureau put the poverty rate at 14.5 percent representing 45.3 million people.
* That’s +2.8% on the percentage and +12,400,000 million people living in poverty. Not exactly a success story for President Obama’s Administration.
* On the income line, in 2002 family median income was $42,228. In 2013 the median income was $51,759.

*Dear Mr. Mullings.*

*As arithmetically challenged as you are, you have to agree that the 2013 number, $51,759, is about 9,500 bucks* more *than 2002’s $42,228.*

*Signed,*

*The Staff at MSNBC*

* **Ahh. You must think I’m new at this.**
* **If you look at that $42,228 in 2013 dollars it comes out to $54,700. That means the median income in America has *dropped* by nearly $3,000.**
* **As to the uninsured rate, it appears to have fallen, but because of the botched roll-out of Obamacare we won’t have good numbers on 2014 until sometime in 2015.**
* **As former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld almost said: “You go to war with the statistics you have, not with the statistics you want.”**
* I am not rooting against President Obama in this effort to, at least, weaken some of the baddest of the bad actors on the planet. I am all for it.
* Good for him that even four of the Gulf States (that’s Persian, not Mexican) are lending their air forces to the effort.
* Turkey, however, is cowering under the covers at the thought of engaging in this war for fear of becoming a target, and Qatar, according to David Kirkpatrick’s reporting on September 7 in the New York Times:

“has for many years helped support a spectrum of Islamist groups around the region by providing safe haven, diplomatic mediation, financial aid and, in certain instances, weapons.”

* Reuters’ Angus McDowall and William Maclean reported this week:

“Of the five Arab states named by Washington as supporting U.S.-led strikes against the jihadist group in Syria, Bahrain, Jordan and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) confirmed they had actually flown sorties. Saudi Arabia said it had ‘participated in military operations’, and Qatar was believed to have offered only logistical or political support.

* Here’s another data point that might Hollywood might consider. In the run up to the invasion in 2003, President George W. Bush’s job approval (according to Gallup’s tracking poll) was 58%. Immediately after the invasion began it jumped to 71 percent.
* Using Gallup again, on September 1, Mr. Obama’s job approval was at 38%. As of yesterday afternoon – following the announcement of the bombing of Syria, it had popped up to 44 percent.
* Maybe a smart war can also be smart politics.
* On the <a href = “<http://www.mullings.com/dr_09-25-14.htm>**” <**b> Secret Decoder Ring</b></a> page today: Links to the Hollywood Reporter article, to the transcript of Sen. Obama’s “Dumb War” speech, to the NY Times coverage of why the neighbors are angry with Qatar and to the Reuters report on which Arab country is doing what.

Also an interesting Mullfoto from my visit to the belly of the Liberal beast – Sausalito, California – last weekend.

-- END --