

# The New York Times

May 4, 2005

## Science, Education and Our Security

To the Editor:

We were pleased to see Thomas L. Friedman's April 29 column, "What, Me Worry?," as well as his previous efforts to call attention to the erosion of United States leadership in science and technology caused by declining investment in education.

This is particularly true, since the United States Commission on National Security-21st Century, of which we were co-chairmen, reported in January 2001:

"Americans are living off the economic and security benefits of the last three generations' investment in science and education, but we are now consuming our capital.

"Our systems of basic scientific research and education are in crisis, while other countries are redoubling their efforts.

"In the next quarter century, we will likely see ourselves surpassed, and in relative decline, unless we make a conscious national commitment to maintain our edge."

Regrettably, our calls for recapitalization of our education base, by doubling the national investment in science and technology, have been as badly neglected as our warnings of the terrorist threat and calls for the creation of a national homeland security agency were.

Beyond the economic warnings included in Mr. Friedman's column, we believe this to be a major issue directly affecting United States national security.

Gary Hart

Warren Rudman

Denver, April 29, 2005

The writers are former United States senators.