

Has Bill Kristol Finally Lost It?

Throughout the 2016 presidential election cycle—repeatedly throughout—conservative political commentator Bill Kristol has been wrong.

So, when he announced last Sunday he had found an “impressive” conservative alternative candidate for the #NeverTrump voters, you could forgive a few people for being just a tad bit incredulous. Now, it appears that incredulity was probably warranted.

Bloomberg News reported late Tuesday that, according to multiple sources close to Kristol and his search for a candidate, he didn’t have to look very far to find his white knight:

[T]he person Kristol has in mind is David French—whose name the editor of the Weekly Standard floated in the current issue of the magazine.

French is a veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom. According to the website of National Review, where French is a staff writer, he is a constitutional lawyer, a recipient of the Bronze Star, and an author of several books who lives in Columbia, Tennessee, with his wife, Nancy, and three children.

Reached in Israel late Tuesday afternoon, Kristol declined to comment on his efforts to induce French to run. The two Republicans confirmed that French is open to launching a bid but that he has not made a final decision. One of the Republicans added that French has not lined up a running mate or significant financial support.

French certainly hasn’t done anything to quash the rumors. In

fact, he commented indirectly on the news via his Twitter account late Tuesday night, about six hours after the news broke:

I'm incredibly humbled by and grateful for the many expressions of support – thank you.

French is a member of Presbyterian Church in America, a conservative evangelical Calvinist denomination not to be confused with the mainline Presbyterian Church USA. He is a graduate of Harvard Law School and previously lectured at Cornell Law School.

He previously served as president of the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education, and also served as senior counsel for both the American Center for Law and Justice and the Alliance Defending Freedom. He left FIRE in 2005 in order to join the U.S. Army Reserve.

In 2007, French was deployed to the Diyala Province in Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, serving as a judge advocate. He received a Bronze Star—which is generally awarded for heroic achievement, heroic service, meritorious achievement, or meritorious service in a combat zone—although the details surrounding the award haven't been made public.

He remains in the U.S. Army Reserve and holds the rank of Major.

The collective reaction of most conservatives has been: "Who?" which, when running an independent or third-party presidential campaign, is an immediate red flag regarding French's electability, his positions on issues notwithstanding.