

Date: Wed, 13 Jan 2010 14:13:06 -0500

To: "Dr. Baruch Fischhoff - Chair, National Academy of Sciences Study on Social & Behavioral Science and Improving Intelligence for National Security" <baruch@cmu.edu>

From: Lloyd Etheredge <lloyd.etheredge@policyscience.net>

**Subject: The Comparative Government Performance chapter: Would the underwear/shoe bombers have been boarded on E1-A1?**

Dear Dr. Fischhoff & Colleagues:

Just to develop my earlier suggestion, I hope that your Study Group will visit Israel. It seems inconceivable that the underwear/shoe bombers would have been boarded on E1-A1 flights headed toward Israel.

Identifying any technical (including databases and analysis methods) and human systems that give superior government performance for Israel could add an important dimension to the National Academy's wartime (in President Obama's terms) Report.

- If your staff has not already been in touch with Loch Johnson, editor of the new Handbook of Intelligence Studies, I urge you to contact him. This network of social scientists is, like many useful fields, not directly represented in the National Academy and the social scientists/scholars who do this work will be, I suspect, reluctant to volunteer unsolicited advice. However better answers to some of your questions about databases and analysis/communication methods may be available via these networks, especially for the comparative government performance variables/lessons; I think that it would be worth asking.

For example, does Israel have its own N=550,000 global Watch List and how do they analyze their data and communicate results?

For the long run, the National Academy might wish (as part of recapitalizing the social sciences) to recommend comparative studies of the performance of democratic governments. Mann & Ornstein's The Broken Branch (2006) re Congress points to a feature of the US system - i.e., that the databases and analysis methods/capacities directly available to Congress and its oversight Committees are an important system-level cause of Executive agency performance, perhaps espe-

cially for public administration of highly secretive N=200,000 bureaucracies where few people will know who has been assigned to do what. <1>

[The Graham and Talent Op Ed piece on delayed H1N1 lessons and breakdowns in Executive branch bioterrorism science (that I recently forwarded) is - to make the point - a reflection of *Congressional* involvement and the role of a very few newspapers. Even President Obama and Admiral Blair apparently do not know about their bioterrorism breakdowns via Executive branch IT management systems or from the National Science Adviser.]

### Comparative Democratic Performance

- As a political scientist, and in Bueno de Mesquita's spirit, could I suggest the higher perceived immediate threat to Israel **and** its national military draft as important variables in its government performance? Whether or not a national draft is advisable in the US, it does create self-interests and greater alertness on campuses, and elsewhere, re national security issues. And greater long-run expertise within the government and citizenry. Also - just to mention briefly - Paul Kennedy's observations about wealth and (later) over-expenditures in global empires and wars dealing with distant threats. Whatever the US + NATO + all other major governments are spending [and the US component starts at \$75 billion/year] there may be too much money available; and thus, in part, funds may not be allocated wisely. Bueno de Mesquita's account of the fall of Sparta is, whether or not classical historians agree, an interesting cautionary theory about models, data and elite analysis. Especially at a time [i.e., wartime] when so many super-smart people are pursuing careers and being paid hundreds of millions of dollars/year in the financial sector.

Lloyd Etheredge

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<1> Muir's Legislature began to develop a rich inventory of potentially relevant variables, based on field observations of the CA legislature (1985) but I do not know of any further analysis expanding to the N=50 state governments.

Dr. Lloyd S. Etheredge - Fellow, World Academy of Art & Science  
Policy Sciences Center Inc.  
127 Wall St., Room 322 - Box 208215  
New Haven, CT 06520-8215  
URL: [www.policyscience.net](http://www.policyscience.net)

301-365-5241 (v); [lloyd.etheredge@policyscience.net](mailto:lloyd.etheredge@policyscience.net) (email)