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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: Rational Rebalancing Options; Fwd: Friedman on jihadist death cults with exploding underpants; NIC: background & vision

Dear Dr. Fischhoff and Colleagues:

Rebalancing Options: In the Present, and Between the Present and the Future

Just to follow up my earlier message about rebalancing and zero-based budget analysis of data systems: I am appending this morning's column by Thomas Friedman and his observations about "jihadist death cults with exploding underpants."

Friedman also raises the question about critical variables that seem to be missing from published DNI analysis and forecasts like Global 2025: the sense of responsibility and leadership from political elites and professional diplomats in these regions. If *this* is the critical pathway, then Admiral Blair's (new) early warning and monitoring systems should be triggering flashing warnings lights and a search for creative solutions.

There are creative solutions but they require foresight and investments. E.g., to cite several that are underway: Georgetown's graduate campus of its School of International Service in Qatar, Princeton's work to support global linkups of professional policy analysis (<http://uc.princeton.edu>), the BBC-TV world channel to build a global village and responsible management sensibility for a globalizing world economy and Davos elites.

More broadly: The world is changing, with a universe of new opportunities that would have been unimaginable to earlier political generations or earlier IR theorists: We could benefit, in many areas, from rapid learning systems and fresh, creative thinking informed by the social and behavioral sciences.

NIC + Friedman = ?

A footnote that might be of interest as the National Academy of Sciences reviews DNI/NIC forecasting data and methods: The National Intelligence Council actually was created to strengthen this kind of longer-range and creative rational analysis for US policy. A rebalanced allocation of resources for a long-range Grand Strategy must be created and sustained by specific institutions: The background to NIC included Bloomfield's interview study of foreign policy planning staffs in about a dozen countries (including the US Department of State). He found that "strategic planning" in these bureaucracies typically had a time horizon of 6 months to a year. Thus, the NIC design was to create rational planning + strategic investment capabilities for a 15-year horizon. However - one inference that I draw from the topics in the memos that I have provided since last fall - we do not yet have a national forecasting system that is as bold, imaginative, and as well-connected to the National Security Council's front-line management and development of policy options for the President as it could be.<1>

Lloyd Etheredge

<1> Many people contributed to this quiet work by behavioral and social scientists, including Alexander George, the Carnegie Corporation's strategic thinking organized by David Hamburg, and leadership from Joseph Nye and Richard Cooper (both, early directors of NIC), and others at Harvard. Bloomfield's memoir, Accidental Encounters with History (and some lessons learned) (2005) includes a more detailed discussion of Cold War work by social scientists to reduce the risk of nuclear war by bringing crisis simulation training to senior levels in the Soviet system.

January 17, 2010
Op-Ed Columnist
What's Our Sputnik?
By THOMAS L. FRIEDMAN

Taipei, Taiwan

Dick Cheney says President Obama is "trying to pretend that we are not at war" with terrorists. There is only one thing I have to say about that: I sure hope so.

Frankly, if I had my wish, we would be on our way out of Afghanistan not in, we

would be letting Pakistan figure out which Taliban they want to conspire with and which ones they want to fight, we would be letting Israelis and Palestinians figure out on their own how to make peace, we would be taking \$100 billion out of the Pentagon budget to make us independent of imported oil — nothing would make us more secure — and we would be reducing the reward for killing or capturing Osama bin Laden to exactly what he's worth: 10 cents and an autographed picture of Dick Cheney.

Am I going isolationist? No, but visiting the greater China region always leaves me envious of the leaders of Hong Kong, Taiwan and China, who surely get to spend more of their time focusing on how to build their nations than my president, whose agenda can be derailed at any moment by a jihadist death cult using exploding underpants.

Could we just walk away? No, but we must change our emphasis. The “war on terrorists” has to begin by our challenging the people and leaders over there. If they're not ready to take the lead, to speak out and fight the madness in their midst, for the future of their own societies, there is no way we can succeed. We'll exhaust ourselves trying. We'd be better off just building a higher wall.

As the terrorism expert Bruce Hoffman noted in an essay in *The Washington Post*: “In the wake of the global financial crisis, Al Qaeda has stepped up a strategy of economic warfare. ‘We will bury you,’ Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev promised Americans 50 years ago. Today, Al Qaeda threatens: ‘We will bankrupt you.’ ” And they will.

Our presence, our oil dependence, our endless foreign aid in the Middle East have become huge enablers of bad governance there and massive escapes from responsibility and accountability by people who want to blame all their troubles on us. Let's get out of the way and let the moderate majorities there, if they really exist, face their own enemies on their own. It is the only way they will move. We can be the wind at their backs, but we can't be their sails. There is some hope for Iraq and Iran today because their moderates are fighting for themselves.

Has anyone noticed the most important peace breakthrough on the planet in the last two years? It's right here: the new calm in the Strait of Taiwan. For decades, this was considered the most dangerous place on earth, with Taiwan and China pointing missiles at each other on hair triggers. Well, over the past two years,

China and Taiwan have reached a quiet rapprochement — on their own. No special envoys or shuttling secretaries of state. Yes, our Navy was a critical stabilizer. But they worked it out. They realized their own interdependence. The result: a new web of economic ties, direct flights and student exchanges.

A key reason is that Taiwan has no oil, no natural resources. It's a barren rock with 23 million people who, through hard work, have amassed the fourth-largest foreign currency reserves in the world. They got rich digging inside themselves, unlocking their entrepreneurs, not digging for oil. They took responsibility. They got rich by asking: "How do I improve myself?" Not by declaring: "It's all somebody else's fault. Give me a handout."

When I look at America from here, I worry. China is now our main economic partner and competitor. Sure, China has big problems. Nevertheless, I hope Americans see China's rise as the 21st-century equivalent of Russia launching the Sputnik satellite — a challenge to which we responded with a huge national effort that revived our education, infrastructure and science and propelled us for 50 years. Unfortunately, the Cheneyites want to make fighting Al Qaeda our Sputnik. Others want us to worry about some loopy remark Senator Harry Reid made about the shade of Obama's skin.

Well, what is our national project going to be? Racing China, chasing Al Qaeda or parsing Harry? Of course, to a degree, we need to both race China and confront Al Qaeda — but which will define us?

"Our response to Sputnik made us better educated, more productive, more technologically advanced and more ingenious," said the Johns Hopkins foreign policy expert Michael Mandelbaum. "Our investments in science and education spread throughout American society, producing the Internet, more students studying math and people genuinely wanting to build the nation."

And what does the war on terror give us? Better drones, body scanners and a lot of desultory T.S.A. security jobs at airports. "Sputnik spurred us to build a highway to the future," added Mandelbaum. "The war on terror is prompting us to build bridges to nowhere."

We just keep thinking we can do it all — be focused, frightened and frivolous. We can't. We don't have the money. We don't have the time.

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