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To: "Dr. Baruch Fischhoff - Chair, National Academy of Sciences panel on Improving Intelligence" <baruch@cmu.edu>

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

**Subject: 11.Youth Cohort Analysis**

Dear Dr. Fischhoff and colleagues:

A *Realpolitik* question is: "Who [i.e., *which nation*] will rule the world?" A sophisticated political answer - that reframes our thinking - is: "Today's young people."

One of the best returns for a focused improvement of US intelligence analysis may be our understanding/forecasting of the emerging global youth culture/cultures. Environmentalism is a global movement because it built itself with an earlier youth cohort. Human rights and global health and the elimination of nuclear weapons may follow. [Or jihadism in some countries/cultures.]

Especially in the world's poorer nations (with extraordinarily large young populations), reaching and linking to youth may be one of America's best political opportunities to help shape an idealistic, better future.

**What Questions Does US Intelligence Ask? What are the Enduring Effects?**

Youth cultures, especially with the growth of MTV as a global channel and the Internet, may be challenging to understand from the outside. It may be tricky to forecast future political effects: The CIA's earlier Harvard project, Thinking in Time (Neustadt & May) emphasized the potential importance of youth cohort/generational analysis for good political analysis, but I am not sure that it's yet done rigorously and well, even in American politics.

- The most powerful causal pathways and effects might be difficult to capture. For progress in human rights and fall of Communism in Eastern Europe, for example, rock and roll and jazz

apparently were unexpectedly powerful political arguments, teaching a generation of young people directly and viscerally about Western freedom and self-expression. Could a new kind of humor - the global youth popularity of a show like The Daily Show with Jon Stewart - be contributing to a new chemistry? Or BBC's intentional promotion of a global village framing to discuss sports and popular culture? Or the Carnegie Commission's political analysis and (adopted) strategy to build shared values by high-visibility and rapid responses to international humanitarian emergencies?

This may require a working group to meet with sociologists who specialize in these questions. I suspect that this is one of the areas where our understandings will improve greatly when you can get the next generation of desktop (global) content analysis online. <1>

best regards,  
Lloyd Etheredge

<1> Michael Merson at Duke has just completed a very interesting analysis of growing youth support for global health for the CSIS Commission on Smart Global Health. This is the kind of analysis upon which the DNI might want to build, as global health strategy will be growing as a component of US/Obama Administration political + humanitarian strategy.

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