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To: "Dr. Baruch Fischhoff - Chair, US National Academy of Sciences Committee on Improving Intelligence" <baruch@cmu.edu>, "Dr. Richard Atkinson" <rcatkinson@ucsd.edu>, "Dr. Robert Keohane" <rkeohane@princeton.edu>, "Dr. Robert Axelrod" <axe@umich.edu>

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

Subject: 187. High Priority "Red Team" Projects: Do Jervis-type Misperceptions Govern World Politics?

Dear Dr. Fischhoff and Colleagues:

It occurs to me, in light of the WikiLeaks databases, that the DNI/NSA probably have equivalent databases of decoded foreign Embassy traffic and many other documents and conversations, internal to other governments. Thus the historic capability exists to draw stratified samples, or use automated "smart" coding across the full data system, to determine if Jervis-type misperceptions actually govern world politics. Or do so, for example, for different classes of states at different levels of sophistication.

This could be important. Misperceptions - for example, of American society and decision making - are something that the State Department and US Ambassador - if alerted - might do something about. During the Cold War, and at a much higher and more focused level, Secretary Henry Kissinger and George Shultz spent many hours with the Soviet Ambassador, as did other senior US officials over the years, to shift their misperceptions and understandings of America (and, for George Shultz, their understanding of market economics and its practical advantages). It was a wise investment.

Jervis Hypotheses and Revolutionary Implications

Jervis's research ideas may have revolutionary implications as we are dealing, possibly, with mechanisms that create conventional beliefs and wisdom that are comfortable and unchallenged. Albeit producing a world politics that is governed by misperceptions? [And perhaps by under-

estimates of the rate of progress that professional diplomats could achieve, because other nation's behavior is attributed to something intrinsic about themselves or the personality of their leaders.]

This is one of our most promising lines of behavioral science exploration and we should get started and move quickly.

-There is a wider universe of hypotheses that also should be tested. Integrated complexity, for example, also is promising: It might be important, re interpreting President Karzai's behavior, to determine whether he is operating in a subjective realm of unintegrated confusion in response to shifting and changing forces or whether he has, like President Obama, the integrated cognitive mastery and stature to chart and manage long-term strategies in a complex world. It is an important assessment about many leaders.

This line of investigation could be an enormous contribution to textbooks and the development of professional diplomacy. There could be creative ways to disguise identities and still achieve important results that could be circulated or published.

Is there anything that you can do?

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