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

**Subject: 258. Foreign Intelligence Services: Advice, Disagreements
and Lessons**

Dear Dr, Fischhoff and Colleagues:

Independent replication is a basic scientific method to validate knowledge or to correct errors and improve knowledge. For President Obama and the DNI system - and foreign leaders - an equivalent strategy would be to compare the different perceptions and analyses that different national intelligence systems provide to their leaders about important issues.

The design of the DNI/National Academy project could include interviews with former officials and professional analysts concerning their impressions of the characteristic biases and errors of their American counterparts.

For example, the British have believed, for years, that they have a superior knowledge of the Islamic world. <1> I once discussed this problem with a young Chinese diplomat in my graduate program at Yale: he suggested that Japanese diplomats seemed to study, think deeply about, and get along with many different nations, cultures, and political systems and could be insightful participants.

- An interesting dimension of this study might be for the US National Security Adviser to arrange, with his British counterpart, for President Obama to receive independently, each morning for several weeks, a copy of the Daily Intelligence Brief provided to the British Prime Minister. The experiment, with reciprocity, could let both the US President and the British Prime Minister raise relevant issues or questions about their own systems.

Worthwhile, Even if America is Superior

The instinctive American response to this suggestion, probably, is that American intelligence analysts and reports to President Obama are inherently superior and foreign intelligence services typically have national and ethnocentric biases and limitations. *If so, this conclusion would be a gold mine of ideas* for the academic world, and for research programs that could eventually upgrade both the diplomatic and intelligence services across the G-20 (and beyond) to achieve better system-level contact with reality.

Adding Economists and Econometrics?

Now that the CIA's portfolio includes international economic forecasting, it might be useful to do a parallel exercise concerning the (often, very different) econometric models and data systems that different national governments use for their own economies and for the economies of other countries (esp. - e.g., in China - where there are important trade relationships affected by foreign growth and interest rates, etc.) The comparative study could be a treasure trove of good ideas. Richard Cooper (Harvard) - a former Director of the National Intelligence Council - began to explore these differences in an academic paper and might have insights about how to proceed.

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<1>Rory Stewart's work, for example, continues this British tradition when he suggests that Americans have rushed into Afghanistan with (again) a perception and overlay that people want to be free and democratic and will "get with the program" and support a democratically elected government in distant Kabul and trust its new "legitimate" national army. The British probably would say that we are dealing with political and social systems similar to the Mafia and portrayed in *The Godfather*. It is not clear that rural Afghans in these kinds of traditional social relation-

ships, cultures, and also with Islamic traditions (i.e., without the Protestant Reformation and (Western) Enlightenment) want, or even understand, what America is preaching at them.

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