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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: The Anti-Americanism chapter; the DNI v. Tom Friedman;
Anatol Rapoport**

Dear Dr. Fischhoff and Colleagues:

The **Anti-Americanism** chapter of the National Academy of Sciences Report on new data systems and analytic methods for US intelligence can make an extraordinary and needed contribution.

For example, nothing that I have read, in the public domain, by our new national \$75 billion/year, N=200,000, DNI mega-system prepared me for this morning's attached Times column ("America vs. The Narrative") by Thomas Friedman. (In the contrast between a NY Times reporter and the US government, obviously I am betting on Tom Friedman.) And I am writing to you because these issues are an ideal vehicle for a chapter in your Report, illustrating wider concerns about DNI data systems and analytic methods and the reality-testing/better models and honest broker contributions that first-rate, independent, and *international* social/behavioral science could make if funds and individual/institutional leadership become available.

Transitory Images in Opinion Polls - or Enrolling Narratives of Identity, History, Enemies, Virtue, and the Future?

For most Americans, anti-Americanism can be interpreted as varying weather reports, or varying and somewhat superficial popularity ratings in elections and public opinion polls in domestic politics. If America's international popularity is down, it could rise again by next year - and the basic mechanism will be individuals responding to objective news reporting, so what Barack Obama and America does - in the post-Iraq, post-Bush, post-Abu Ghraib world - can turn this around.

Friedman says that The Narrative is deeper, and - with repetition - becoming more dangerous. And it is has not gone away in the past year, although Barack Obama is President, the US is exiting Iraq, and Abu Ghraib was many years ago.

Causal Mechanisms - Audiences and Benefits?

Friedman's causal model - a *systemic* model, rather than an individual opinion model - includes the many media outlets and institutions (including some governments) that receive audience, advertising, and other benefits. Thus the proper forecasting model for the DNI to use might be (the still growing in audience share, even after Obama's election) Fox News.

Public Diplomacy and Anatol Rapoport's (Social Science) Warning

I can report that, at least during the Bush Administration, even the more conventional social science re anti-Americanism in the DNI system did not connect to government planners in a usable way. There has been an informal monthly brownbag meeting of political psychologists and students at GW University in the Washington area, meeting for many years and organized by Dr. Jerrold Post, the psychiatrist who helped to develop the CIA's Office of Political Psychology and (now) is also a published and respected leader in academic political psychology. There was an off-the-record meeting with a senior White House staffer in charge of Public Diplomacy in the late Bush Administration. This unnamed source said there was a high-level inter-agency policy and coordinating committee, but its members had been too busy across the past 18 months and it had never met.

Since the National Academy has been asked to recommend how analysis and fresh perceptions/ideas can be brought, usefully and persuasively, to our nation's senior officials, I bring this story to your attention.

- One possible explanation is that the Principals were thinking about global public opinion polls & Public Diplomacy by the more superficial [pre-Friedman] models of changing popularity in American political life. Winning the military wars and creating new "find the hidden enemy" databases/analysis tools were more important for national security and to defeat terrorism.

- May I also bring to your attention, as a conceptual point, a concern raised by the late Anatol Rapoport? In one of my last meetings with him, we were discussing the end of the Cold War. He was passionate that "They will find something else!" I.e., there were so many inter-linked benefits from the Cold War and arms races and enemies - to a systems theorist like Anatol - that the national security apparatus would find new enemies. . . . And I think that Anatol would recognize - although perhaps he would be shocked, too - by the rise of an N=200,000

DNI mega-empire, a global electronic surveillance system, and a \$75 billion/year budget, with counter-parts in other countries - a system that might sustain itself, even with a small N of current known enemies.

My conceptual point is that we are still beginning, as social scientists, to design and understand models of complex systems. The question of why Friedman's evidence and long-term strategic thinking re The Narrative has not yet connected in the DNI models (even to the Obama Administration), and why a top-level strategy planning committee - even with a flawed causal model - never met in the Bush years, could deserve a meta-analysis and meta-warning by the National Academy and our nation's leading social scientists.<1> <2>

Yours truly,
Lloyd Etheredge

<1> I can give another example, from my early study of return engagements & CIA interventions in Central America across thirty years, about Anatol's kind of social science warning: At each point (starting in 1954), the mindset of American officials was to accompany the emergency CIA interventions against threatened Communist advances with new foreign aid programs for prevention and long-term regional economic and political development. ["Change must occur, but violence is not the way!"] They were sincere: Eisenhower sent his brother Milton on a fact-finding tour to design new foreign aid programs; Kennedy started the Alliance for Progress; Kissinger chaired a Commission for the Caribbean Basin Development Plan. . . it's a perennial American response, like the Mekong River Development Plan under LBJ or the even earlier Yangtze River Development Plan of the late 1940s.

However, at a systemic level, other factors predictably intervened. The plans came apart within a couple of years. Congress did not sustain the appropriations more than 2-3 years after the emergency abated. Idealistic and activist senior officials could not make progress and they resigned. Local governments diverted money and did not share the US priorities for foreign aid.

Anatol's kind of system model - which might predict that the system could "know about," but nevertheless contribute to, unaddressed conditions that caused further anti-US, Communist revolutions in Central America - is not based on a direct mapping of individual psychology and intentions. [Indeed, it would have seemed wrong, extraordinarily inconsistent with their own self-knowledge, and insulting and goofy radicalism, to tell earlier US officials that "America doesn't care .

. . "]. However we ought to be giving further thought to Anatol's level of system thinking re terrorism and anti-Americanism, this time recognizing the new and unexpected role of other factors. And an additional level of analysis that is needed for US intelligence and institutionalized learning.

<2.> You might want to invite a contribution by Robert Keohane, a member of the National Academy who headed a CASBS group and edited, with Peter Katzenstein, an analysis (with earlier generation models) of anti-Americanisms.

November 29, 2009
Op-Ed Columnist

America vs. The Narrative

By THOMAS L. FRIEDMAN

What should we make of Maj. Nidal Malik Hasan, who apparently killed 13 innocent people at Fort Hood?

Here's my take: Major Hasan may have been mentally unbalanced _ I assume anyone who shoots up innocent people is. But the more you read about his support for Muslim suicide bombers, about how he showed up at a public-health seminar with a PowerPoint presentation titled "Why the War on Terror Is a War on Islam," and about his contacts with Anwar al-Awlaki, a Yemeni cleric famous for using the Web to support jihadist violence against America _ the more it seems that Major Hasan was just another angry jihadist spurred to action by "The Narrative."

What is scary is that even though he was born, raised and educated in America, The Narrative still got to him.

The Narrative is the cocktail of half-truths, propaganda and outright lies about America that have taken hold in the Arab-Muslim world since 9/11. Propagated by jihadist Web sites, mosque preachers, Arab intellectuals, satellite news stations and books _ and tacitly endorsed by some Arab regimes _ this narrative posits that America has declared war on Islam, as part of a grand "American-Crusader-Zionist conspiracy" to keep Muslims down.

Yes, after two decades in which U.S. foreign policy has been largely dedicated to rescuing Muslims or trying to help free them from tyranny _ in Bosnia, Darfur, Kuwait, Somalia, Lebanon, Kurdistan, post-earthquake Pakistan, post-tsunami Indonesia, Iraq and Afghanistan _ a narrative that says America is dedicated to keeping Muslims down is thriving.

Although most of the Muslims being killed today are being killed by jihadist suicide bombers in Pakistan, Iraq, Afghanistan and Indonesia, you'd never know it from listening to their world. The dominant narrative there is that 9/11 was a kind of fraud: America's unprovoked onslaught on Islam is the real story, and the Muslims are the real victims _ of U.S. perfidy.

Have no doubt: we punched a fist into the Arab/Muslim world after 9/11, partly to send a message of deterrence, but primarily to destroy two tyrannical regimes _ the Taliban and the Baathists _ and to work with Afghans and Iraqis to build a different kind of politics. In the process, we did some stupid and bad things. But for every Abu Ghraib, our soldiers and diplomats perpetrated a million acts of kindness aimed at giving Arabs and Muslims a better chance to succeed with modernity and to elect their own leaders.

The Narrative was concocted by jihadists to obscure that.

It's working. As a Jordanian-born counterterrorism expert, who asked to remain anonymous, said to me: "This narrative is now omnipresent in Arab and Muslim communities in the region and in migrant communities around the world. These communities are bombarded with this narrative in huge doses and on a daily basis. [It says] the West, and right now mostly the U.S. and Israel, is single-handedly and completely responsible for all the grievances of the Arab and the Muslim worlds. Ironically, the vast majority of the media outlets targeting these communities are Arab-government owned _ mostly from the Gulf."

This narrative suits Arab governments. It allows them to deflect onto America all of their people's grievances over why their countries are falling behind. And it suits Al Qaeda, which doesn't need much organization anymore _ just push out The Narrative over the Web and satellite TV, let it heat up humiliated, frustrated or socially alienated Muslim males, and one or two will open fire on their own. See: Major Hasan.

"Liberal Arabs like me are as angry as a terrorist and as determined to change the status quo," said my Jordanian friend. The only difference "is that while we choose education, knowledge and success to bring about change, a terrorist, having bought into the narrative, has a sense of powerlessness and helplessness, which are inculcated in us from childhood, that lead him to believe that there is only one way, and that is violence."

What to do? Many Arab Muslims know that what ails their societies is more than the West, and that The Narrative is just an escape from looking honestly at themselves. But none of their leaders dare or care to open that discussion. In his Cairo speech last June, President Obama effectively built a connection with the Muslim mainstream. Maybe he could spark the debate by asking that same audience this question:

"Whenever something like Fort Hood happens you say, 'This is not Islam.' I believe that. But you keep telling us what Islam isn't. You need to tell us what it is and show us how its positive interpretations are being promoted in your schools and mosques. If this is not Islam, then why is it that

a million Muslims will pour into the streets to protest Danish cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad, but not one will take to the streets to protest Muslim suicide bombers who blow up other Muslims, real people, created in the image of God? You need to explain that to us _ and to yourselves.”

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