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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](mailto:lloyd.etheredge@policyscience.net)

## Subject: Lessons by the NIC Global Trends 2010 authors

Dear Dr. Fischhoff and Colleagues:

Re recommendations to improve US intelligence data systems and analytic methods, your Committee might want to invite judgments from the authors of three earlier 15-year government forecasts (before the current Global 2025). These forecasts are published every 5 years, and the November 1997 (revised) edition of Global Trends 2010 is online. What, seeing today's world, do the earlier authors recommend about data, theories, missing variables, and methods, etc.?

**Looking back: What did you miss? What (different) behavioral science assumptions would have made unexpected developments more visible? Where would better data have made a difference?**

These comments could be very useful, both to your Report and as sidebar quotes to underscore lessons. Especially in vital areas - e.g., **global finance/macro-economic forecasting** - that are urgent for your Committee and the National Academy of Sciences to get right and to address bluntly and boldly. . . . For example, Richard Cooper, Prof., of Economics at Harvard, was responsible for Global Trends 2010 and there are effects in international economics/finance that were not foreseen - and international economics is his field.

I have not discussed his self-reflections and current advice with him. But my own assessment (as you know) is that the asymmetries of brainpower and money (e.g., in international finance) that were successfully deployed to secure government deregulation and to dumb-down institutions and critical evidence-based policy analysis were unexpected. [There were catastrophic institutional and scientific failures that Global Trends 2010 missed.] Thinking aloud: perhaps we should attend to Toynbee and institutional erosions afflicting successful and unchallenged empires/civilizations? Or to the Republican (Harding) "return to normalcy" cycle after WW I, with its corruptions and public negligence leading to the Depression?

Or get past the Kuhnian academic problems and quickly build a new generation of hybrid political economy models (e.g., predator-prey eco-system) to understand the vulnerabilities/risk of many national political systems/economies?

- The new institutional remedies and credible models are not yet being underwritten or even discussed: The era of Republican mindlessness still is with us.

### **Re Trends & Political Opportunities, Creativity & Combinatorial Thinking**

At the time, I was distressed that Global Trends 2010 (1997) did a poor job of recognizing the creative potential of emerging global communications technologies and how they could be used for fast learning systems and a universe of other unrecognized opportunities. This is still true of the US government [including the DNI system], notwithstanding that its worries about "the capacities of governments to manage change" and "the race to match intellectual and material resources with public expectations" and scientific innovation and "governance" are perennial concerns.

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