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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 Analysis & Forecasting: Non-Rational Behavior chapter

Dear Dr. Fischhoff and Colleagues:

The National Academy of Sciences recommendations re "Analysis and Forecasting: Non-Rational Behavior" may be your most important.

I have three examples of current problems and opportunities for improvement. And a suggested test of a theory of belief-independent spiritual leadership that might ease transitions to peaceful relations with the Islamic world.

About Definitions

I will follow a suggestion by the international relations theorist Kenneth Waltz who wrote: "'rationality' carries the wrong connotations" and that it is best, even when you think that behavior is selected in light of anticipated consequences, simply to say specifically what you have in mind.<1> Which I will do concerning non-rational behavior in three areas: a.) terrorism (esp. suicide terrorism), b.) belief-independent spiritual growth and leadership, and c.) disturbances of hierarchical psychology.

I. Terrorism and Public Drama in Non-Individualist Cultures and Societies

Re the causes of terrorism (including suicide terrorism): Sorel's "myth of the general strike" analysis in his Reflections on Violence (1911) should expand and enhance DNI's (NATO's) official definition that "the purpose of terrorism is to terrorize." In fact terrorism, in non-individualist cultures and societies, also is a public event in a public psychodrama with vicarious rewards and aimed at different audiences - i.e., its purpose is to excite people and enroll recruits, especially male recruits. Thus Osama bin Laden - in the videotape that was released showing his reaction to news of the successful 9/11 attacks - did not ask whether 9/11 was terrifying Americans into retreat, but focused on the news of increased recruitment and movement-building within the Islamic world itself.

Terrorism is jointly an act in physical reality and in the imagination, an arousing act of striking-back at the oppressor, a political act that enrolls the young, the idealistic, and the powerless.<2> And these psychodramas are enhanced by new communications media, especially visual, that make distant reality alive, present, and emotionally engaging for wider communities. The violence does *not* arise from rational analytic and strategic thought about power and a probability analysis that blowing up the World Trade Center will directly cause a newly terrified America to abandon its national interests and oil-based economy and withdraw from the Middle East.

Thus, the DNI's public analysis of terrorist recruitment remains deeply deficient. Yes, the appeal of terrorism is to "*unformed* [sic] Islamic youth" - in one sense - but they are well-socialized in another sense: if it was victimized Americans being treated on American nightly news with the graphic horrors that daily permeate - and since the global communications revolution (which began before 9/11) *have* permeated - the Islamic world, we would understand the "striking back" appeal to males (and, to a growing degree, women). Our DNI system might achieve deeper empathy and wiser policy about what we face.<3>

Empathy and the complete diagnosis are important to get right: Dealing with this problem of terrorist violence (especially of suicide terrorism) will require a policy package that recognizes all of the causal components and works all of the angles that are available.

II. Spiritual Leadership and Belief-Independent Spiritual Growth

There is a kind of magnetic affinity between Right-wing politics and fundamentalist Right wings of religions - and an attraction of authoritarian or messianic personalities to lead both kinds of movements - that can cause political trouble and increase the potential for violence. However the DNI's public analysis of religion ("extremist v. moderate") and politics needs to be expanded by a recognition of the extraordinary political healing that can come - along a different dimension - from genuine spiritual leadership.

- Genuine spiritual leaders achieve healing beyond the power of political leaders. It was the spiritual leadership of Quakers that ended slavery in the British Empire and most countries worldwide. It was Martin Luther King who, a century after the Civil War, brought the US civil rights movement to its major breakthrough without a race war across the American South; Gandhi and Nelson Man-

dela and Bishop Tutu brought a different dimension and resonance with people, across boundaries.

- Thus the DNI might want to consider that the failure of peace between Israel and its neighbors may not be an issue of fundamentalist v. moderate religious leaders, or of failure by conventional political leaders, but the lack of equivalently powerful spiritual leadership on both sides.

[The National Academy is asked, only rarely, to give advice about social and behavioral sciences and national intelligence. There will be wide audiences for your Report in addition to the funding agencies/national security bureaucracies. I hope that you will discuss the potential benefits of R&D concerning belief-independent spiritual growth for these audiences. There might be many possible healing and progressive movements and alliances possible - with new resonances across boundaries and sects.]

- **Here is a practical suggestion** and a test of non-rational spiritual leadership and cross-boundary resonance: To exercise spiritual leadership, *Americans might want to try expressing deep anger and pain that they are forced to be in Afghanistan and killing people.* [Any anger and pain that America was being required to kill other people was not, for example, the message that Secretary of State Clinton recently conveyed in Pakistan, in her Web-cast "town meeting," when she was asked how American use of pilotless drones that killed non-combatants was any different than the 9/11 attack on America?]

The better message to convey authentically is: "This is *not* who we really are, but it *is* who will be if our people are attacked and threatened." Expressing deep anger and pain at being in the position of causing injury to another human being is not a message that people at the street level in the Middle East are accustomed to hear from political leaders.

III. Iraq and Disturbances of Hierarchical Psychology

It would be useful for the DNI system to have a deeper analysis of how disturbances of hierarchical structures and psychology can unleash anxiety and crazy behavior. The pathologies can be seen, in very moderate and transitional form, in freshmen dormitories.

The psychoanalytic tradition that has focused on the positive, stabilizing effects of hierarchies has been (not surprisingly) British. The Tavistock Institute pioneered experiential work using small and large groups that is used in psychiatry training (my experience with Tavistock groups was part of my graduate training, in the Psychiatry Department at Yale). The method also introduces ideas, in the Klein-Bion tradition, about linkages between individual psychopathology and forms of hierarchical psychodrama. The early theory article was E. Jaques, "Social Systems as a Defence Against Persecutory and Depressive Anxiety" - there also is Hobbesian/psychotic anxiety (the fear of everything falling apart into chaos).

Put directly: the dissolution of a hierarchical structure that always have defined people's lives and relationships to one another can unleash craziness. It is clear that Donald Rumsfeld and whoever imagined the liberation of Iraq had never been in a Tavistock group. Nor do American planners seeking to be helpful to Russia, now with widespread anomie and public health problems (e.g. alcoholism and drug use), seem to have a deep analysis of causes and remedies. And the DNI system needs these methods of analysis and forecasting.

Just as a footnote: About two decades ago Dr. Margaret Rioch, a distinguished American clinical psychologist [founder of the A. K. Rice Institute] and Dr. Post, the psychiatrist who directed early personality and politics work at the CIA, actually visited several professional graduate schools of international relations to encourage them to offer Tavistock training experiences to their students. However, I am not aware of any who provide it.

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<1.> Kenneth Waltz, "A Response to My Critics," pp. 322 - 345 in Robert O. Keohane (Ed.) Neorealism and Its Critics (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1986), p. 330.

<2.> Even strategists of revolution acknowledge that terrorism will not scare the enemy enough to win victory: William R. Polk, Violent Politics: A History of Insurgency, Terrorism & Guerrilla War, from the American Revolution to Iraq. (NY: Harper-Collins, 2007).

<3.> The late Donald Campbell wrote an insightful article about "Ethnocentric and Other Altruistic Motives" for violence. Yes, there is truth to the intelligence community's "hatred bred in the bone" view of causation and socialization in religious fundamentalist institutions in the Islamic world, but it is too limited. There are motivational appeals at *all* levels, including altruism - and especially to achieve recruits for suicide terrorism. American forecasting models and public discussion need refined analysis and to shift a range of different causes via a policy package, since idealistic and altruistic youth - willing to give their lives to benefit their people - are not inherent enemies of America.

[While being critical of the DNI's analysis, it *is* one of the scientific strengths and political achievements of the NATO/DNI government analysis that it has moved beyond individual psychopathology models of terrorism. They do not fit the data.]

<4.> A further discussion of the belief-independent spiritual growth hypothesis is at the end of my "Wisdom and Public Policy" chapter in the Sternberg and Jordan Cambridge UP volume (2005; a reference copy is online at www.policyscience.net).

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