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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 World Cultural Change chapter**

Dear Dr. Fischhoff and Colleagues:

The forecasting of world cultural change is one of the weakest parts of the four global forecasts published by the US Director of National Intelligence/ National Intelligence Council across the past two decades. This is, in one sense, puzzling: It will be the cultural changes that partly determine the purposes that will be served by economic and military capabilities across the next fifteen years.

Also, especially in the global communications age - whose evolution is in the purview of the latest Global 2025 forecast - it might be possible to influence cultural variables more readily and constructively than in the past.

The challenges notwithstanding, the relevant scientific issues of conceptualization, databases, and analysis deserve a strong chapter in your Report.

Just a couple of brief notes:

- Restarting content analysis methods will help everyone, including the academic world, to make faster scientific progress about these issues. Several Centers, with core grants to pursue these cultural continuity/change questions, would be a good step.

- Cultures come in many varieties, beyond the old National Geographic categories of peoples in traditional native and ethnic costumes. There are youth/teen cultures; lower class, middle class, popular, & high-brow cultures; cultures of science, of modernity and post-modern cultures, women's cultures, children's cultures, political cultures, music cultures, drug cultures, religious cultures (of many varieties, even within traditions), academic cultures and cultures of professions, Wall Street and capitalist cultures, military cultures, and Western cultures. There are guilt and shame cultures, strong cultures and cultural breakdowns (e.g.,

in key respects, post-Communist Russia), cosmopolitan and pluralist cultures and identity diffusion/cultural crisis zones of societies. Cultures can give core identities or - like drinking Coca-Cola or deciding between a Chinese or Indian restaurant or pizza - simply enrich options for individuals. There are (perhaps) levels of consciousness, enlightenment and/or moral reasoning and/or cognitive development and education that cross-walk traditional cultural categories. Etc. Sorting these out is part of the challenge of forecasting the admixtures that will shape the future.

- It could be easier if we think of cultures as having generative grammars - e.g., as in Leites, The Operational Code of the Politburo. For example, US popular movies have global audiences but Indian movies - and India is the most prolific movie producing country in the world - seldom travel beyond India's national boundaries. What makes Indian culture Indian? Is Chinese culture really changing in any deep sense via engagements with modernity and the West? This idea of cultural generative grammars, linked to Chomsky's work, might be worth pursuing and help to sort-out what is deep and fundamental v. changing superficial content. And the work could help to answer the neuroscience question of the extent to which different cultures actually hard-wire brains differently.

- Samuel Huntington - who helped to frame these questions, but only started to pursue them - estimated that the global cosmopolitan/Davos culture only constitutes - outside the West - the subjectivity of about 50 million people, and perhaps less than one-tenth of one percent of the world's population. Although; "Davos people control virtually all international institutions, many of the world's governments, and the bulk of the world's economic and military capabilities." (p. 57, The Clash of Civilizations).

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