

Date: Thu, 31 Dec 2009 00:18:30 -0500

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 Nature of Intelligence chapter. Who was smarter - Reagan or Kissinger - about Cold War politics? Discuss, using theories of Salovey and Sternberg**

Dear Dr. Fischhoff & Colleagues:

Several members of your Study Group (with backgrounds in psychology) will be familiar with the different types and dimensions of individual intelligence. This work - Salovey, Sternberg, and others - can enrich the National Academy's dialogue with the intelligence community.

Analysis of variance/statistical inference science is only one type of intelligence and, given the challenges that we face, we probably need everything online that we can get. Multi-dimensional models also create obvious opportunities for personnel training. And of presenting to Presidents the information that both supports their strengths and challenges their weaknesses and blind spots. These models also raise questions about intelligence beyond the education, socialization, and conceptions of intelligence that are functional in large national security/analytic bureaucracies.

### Reagan's Intelligence

One possibility is that brilliant work with people, including the psychodramas of mass psychology, may belong to a different realm than national security bureaucracies know how to recognize. For example, Ronald Reagan had good instincts about people, he was comfortable in his own skin, he knew how to be a leading man, and he knew how to write a good Third Act. But his was not an academic intelligence: As he said (with a warm smile and a twinkle in his eye) when he received an honorary degree from his alma mater, Eureka College: "I sorta thought that the first degree was honorary, too."

## Kissinger, Nixon, and McNamara v. Reagan

As I think about the super-ideal of databases and analytic social science methods for the DNI system, I keep returning to the unexpected historical miracle of ending the Cold War. The most brilliant Realpolitik, rational minds of the Republican Party were deeply wary of what Reagan and George Shultz were doing. I have seen no evidence that Henry Kissinger or Richard Nixon would have ended the Cold War in these years or perceived the world in the way that led Reagan down his path. Even McNamara - committed to rational analysis and the control of nuclear weapons - said, as part of the television movie, The Next Day, that aired in November 1983, that the best [rational analytic] arms control analysts did not foresee any possibility of a reduction beyond 15% in nuclear arms on both sides.

Here, to deepen the point, is Walter Isaacson, former Managing Editor of Time and a veteran political reporter, who is smart and well-educated himself (by academic standards - Harvard and a Rhodes Scholar) and who has known many brilliantly rational men and political leaders in Washington and elsewhere, and who has studied how they think. Isaacson's American Sketches (2009) looks at several people who have gone beyond what a baseline of rational, brilliant people achieved, including Reagan - who saw, and related to the world, in ways that elude Isaacson's professional schema. Isaacson also comments that Edmund Morris, an accomplished historian who was Reagan's authorized biographer, threw up his hands and decided that - while he knew what Reagan believed (Reagan was articulate about this) - he was flummoxed by how his mind worked. Here is Isaacson at the beginning of his chapter on Reagan:

"[H]istorians a century hence will be assessing Ronald Reagan. There are so many basic questions that even his friends cannot quite figure out such as (to start with the most basic one): Was he smart? . . . [W]hat was behind his warm smile and his slightly colder eyes?"

I think that Ronald Reagan probably had a different kind of intelligence and that it was recognized by Secretary of State George Shultz. Shultz - a man of integrity, good values, with good instincts about people, wide life experience [also, a former member of Richard Nixon's Cabinet] and strong academic credentials - was on Reagan's wavelength and his partner in ending the Cold War. He also recommended that Reagan pursue a personal dialogue with Gorbachev. It would be worthwhile asking Shultz's views about Reagan's dimensions of intelligence in the context of your current task to improve all of the dimensions of intelligence in in-

ternational affairs.

best regards,  
Lloyd Etheredge

Dr. Lloyd S. Etheredge - Fellow, World Academy of Art & Science  
Policy Sciences Center Inc.  
127 Wall St., Room 322 - Box 208215  
New Haven, CT 06520-8215  
URL: [www.policyscience.net](http://www.policyscience.net)  
301-365-5241 (v); [lloyd.etheredge@policyscience.net](mailto:lloyd.etheredge@policyscience.net) (email)