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From: Lloyd Etheredge <lloyd.etheredge@policyscience.net>

Subject: 171. Woodward on Petraeus's "forehead-smacking moment"

Dear Dr. Fischhoff and Colleagues:

You might want to take a serious look at the behavioral science & analysis issues, re Afghanistan, raised in Woodward's new book. For example, the discussion of the work of Derek Harvey and his "the blind leading the blind" assessment of US knowledge of the Afghan insurgency after seven years. (I have been using Kindle, and the discussion begins at location 1,403 - I don't know how to translate this into page numbers).

At the time, the DNI system already was running at about \$75 billion/year with oversight responsibility for military intelligence and briefings at the senior levels of government. But if so much fundamental behavioral data was lacking for so long, why did the DNI's senior leadership fail to detect this? The President might not have responded, but Secretary Rice had a doctorate in social science and was a former Provost at Stanford and she might have understood the issue.

At this point, I think that the nation could benefit from your (National Academy of Sciences) assessment of the new data systems, analysis methods, and causal/forecasting models at the new Afghanistan-Pakistan Center of Excellence in Tampa, Florida. Did the apparent upgrade from the 90 distinct categories of information from Afghanistan (to 500, apparently, in the system you currently are advising) make a difference?

- I raise this question, too, because there is institutional memory about these problems. The late Paul Berman, a member of my thesis committee in the early 1970s, wrote his MIT doctoral thesis and first book based on RAND studies of Viet Cong recruitment

and institution-building. Samuel Popkin, a leading political scientist (now at UCSD), also worked on these issues. Could there be the same error in Afghanistan - which McNamara was accused of making in Vietnam - of gathering huge quantities of numbers without being able to gain the empathy with the actual psychology and culture that is necessary for policy and forecasting?

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