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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 Peace Process chapter & the National Academy's advice**

Dear Dr. Fischhoff and Study Group members:

The **Peace Process** chapter in the National Academy's Report will be an exciting and unique opportunity for social and behavioral scientists to recommend new data systems, lines of investigation, and analytic methods to the US intelligence community.

Consider the costs that Americans have paid, in both Iraq wars and since 9/11, for mistaken forecasts and our involvement in the Middle East, where the "peace process" has not yet worked. This could be your most important chapter. It is an area of the world that may become an even more dangerous place, with threats of nuclear proliferation, to oil supplies, to Israel, and to Western nations that are involved in the region. I hope that the National Academy of Sciences can get it right.

A great deal might be learned about a faster peace process, Middle East politics, and forecasting for a fraction of the \$75 billion/year that is available in the DNI's budget.

- I hope that your National Academy of Sciences Committee is receiving the input that it needs. There are so many social and behavioral scientists, in the US, Israel, and other countries who have been involved in the peace process and the region's politics, who are knowledgeable about the region, and who may have theories, analytic methods, and new data to recommend. And there have been so many hopes and failures of forecasting, and possible mistakes in "the peace process" [itself, a phrase that is a professional experiment in cognitive framing that members of your Study Group will recognize] that can be a basis for rapid learning. Social scientists from leading US research universities have served as Secretaries of State and National Security Advisers: I hope that you will invite their ideas and reflections.

## **Two Suggestions**

1.) Re US post-mortems: Although he is not a social scientist, you might want to include Aaron David Miller's The Much Too Promised Land: America's Elusive Search of Arab-Israeli Peace (2008) within your purview. It is the most candid insider account that I have seen (from twenty years on the American side) re American return engagements: theories, forecasts, initiatives, postmortems and lessons/non-lessons. There are lessons about *hubris* and learning and (perhaps) an outline (for cognitive psychology) of what a beginner-to-expert arc looks like for professional diplomacy in this region. There are possible levels of empathy and insight (and compassion), for example, that you are unlikely to find in current DNI databases and analysis methods.

Miller also can write, and bring reality to life, in a useful way and with an artist's gifts. Science - in the physical sciences - developed as a rhetorical style/cultural system to portray and discuss reality with an abstract distance and without engaging or arousing emotion - i.e., objectively and dispassionately. Miller has elements of this tradition - professional detachment - but real people come to life, and there is a recognition of what Weber called the ubiquity of unjustified suffering that, along with detachment, he recommended as a basis for wise political decisions. His methods - for analysis and presentation in the human/social sciences - might be worth some experiments by the DNI system.

2.) A second limited suggestion, that I forwarded on Sept 26 [there is a reference copy on [www.policyscience.net](http://www.policyscience.net)]: You might want to recommend a fresh look at the behavior of teenage Arab males, especially the neuropsychology of the enemy images and the kinds of direct enrollments in political combat that we observe in video games with the same images. In most parts of the world political violence is controlled by socialized obedience to a government authority - if the government surrenders, the troops surrender, and there is peace. But the media-driven psychodramas (e.g., Tom Friedman's column about The Narrative, forwarded earlier) can connect directly.

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