Date: Wed, 16 Dec 2009 13:20:39 -0500
To: "Dr. Baruch Fischhoff - Chair, National Academy of Sciences Study on Social & Behavioral Science and Improving Intelligence for National Security" <baruch@cmu.edu>
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Subject: The Scenario Methods chapter: Intelligence, creativity, wisdom

Dear Dr. Fischhoff and Colleagues:

The Director of National Intelligence/National Intelligence Council is starting to create alternative scenarios to organize and analyze data and assist US global forecasting and strategic planning (e.g., Global 2025).

I suggest that you include scenario methods in your Report. Based on the literature, there are likely to be an evolution of the methods in Global 2025 that the National Academy of Sciences will want to recommend. There have been several decades of cumulative experience since the modern beginning at Royal Dutch Shell.<1>

In addition to their technical results, scenario methods also are useful to acquire and communicate information and to stimulate analysis and discussion. They have been adapted to nation-building work, as a collaboration tool across tribes and ethnic groups, in South Africa. [Thus they might improve upon focus groups, survey research, and other methods in the anticipated US return engagements with African nation-building challenges in Somalia and elsewhere, which past US engagements did not resolve.]

Three Suggestions
At this point, I have three suggestions to improve the DNI/NIC current use of scenario methods: 1.) Expanded repertoires for reasoning by analogy; 2.) A two-step process to decide upon tracking indicators, and 3.) Adding goal-based scenarios to support President Obama.

I.) **Expand scenarios for reasoning by analogy**. Rather than fit mathematical models by statistical methods, people often reason by analogy, including using vivid images and metaphors, stories, and memories to imagine and discuss the possible

future. The Hitler analogy or falling dominoes or Vietnam. But a world class chess master might select from among 50,000 scenarios, stored in memory on the basis of 4-5 hours of varied practice/day for 10-15 years. Thus, it would be helpful for scenario writers to find ways to expand the imaginative repertoire of the national security/foreign policy community.

Two modest suggestions: A.) Consider substituting "Mafia chieftain" for the media term "warlord" in discussing Afghanistan. Everybody has seen the movie, The Godfather, and - extrapolating via Weber (i.e., I'm not an Afghanistan expert) - the analogy may invoke richer intelligence than the term "warlord." Thus, when policy analysts talk about nation-building and democratic elections in Afghanistan to establish a legitimate government, a listener could do a mental comparison of how a Mafia chieftain *and* his extended family would think about democratic elections (and outsiders). B.) The media term "insurgents" invokes little stored intelligence. But invoking the movie The Battle of Algiers - as the military began to do, when it began to show the movie to young officers during the Petraeus rethinking process in Iraq - can stimulate thought about where different actions might lead. Even a focus on a single character, Ali la Pointe, could stimulate thought and planning, based on analysis of the multiple levels of appeal that recruit talented, unemployed youth into leadership in violent movements.

II.) **Tracking Indicators**. A good refinement of scenario methods is to go beyond a one-stage answer or "most likely" story and create a universe of tracking indicators for the key changing processes that might shape the range of possible futures. These tracking indicators are continually monitored by a planning staff and they can facilitate early recognition of actual trends, quick analysis, and agile responses. Here are three examples, based on my earlier memos:

A. Youth cohorts. In earlier memos I have suggested that - *pace* images of global chess between nation-state persona - youth cohorts are a key location where the future is being shaped.<2> You could build upon Global 2025 and take a further step to outline a rigorous set of tracking indicators of youth cohorts in "youth bulge" countries [which Global 2025 viewed as a potential source of increased terrorist recruitment in domestic violence or internationally]. From this analysis, creative thinking about CCC and other initiatives could begin.

B. "Dumbing Down;"   Print Media and Advertising Revenue. As a political scientist, another part of my causal map is the role of print journalism. Thus the

new economics of advertising and the eroding economics of professional journalism deserve alert, worldwide monitoring. With good tracking indicators, any reductions of cognitive complexity, rise of sensationalism, and other "dumbing down" - if it is occurring in other countries - should trigger alarms and creative, strategic thought.

C. <u>Restarting Content Analysis</u>. Restarting university-based content analysis is a basic investment to develop a wide range of new and useful global tracking measures. These include youth cohorts, the changes in print journalism, and (discussed in earlier memos) early warnings of increases in political conflict and regime instability as a result of growing economic hardship, anti-Americanism, the growth of global social capital, etc.

III.) **<u>Purpose-Based Scenarios: Even when the future might be like the past. What's missing?</u>**

Alongside scenarios to forecast "the" future it would be helpful to create scenarios for goals that will only partly occur naturally. These depressing, limited-change, exercises begin the process of analyzing what is missing, management planning, thinking about leadership, and long-term learning.

For example, when President Obama specifies a goal in December 2009 - **bending history toward justice** - the DNI/NIC system should engage an agenda to expand <u>Global 2025</u> and write realistic scenarios about where the world will be, by criteria of justice, in 2025, even if they are sobering. [Royal Dutch Shell - for example - developed one early default scenario, called SCRAMBLE, whereby many institutions talk about renewable energy, conservation, and global warming problems, but nothing really occurs until, someday, a true crisis is vividly eminent. A universe of continually updated tracking indicators, based on SCRAMBLE, can alert users when they still need methods to link scientific warnings, and public talk, to more effective mechanisms of genuine international leadership.]

Lloyd E.

<1> A technical review is Kees van der Heijden, <u>Scenarios: The Art of Strategic Conversation</u> (NY: Wiley, 2005), second edition. Brief introductions and their current examples are on http://www.shell.com/scenarios/ . The work of Robert Sternberg - e.g., <u>Wisdom, Intelligence, and Creativity Synthesized</u> (Cambridge UP, 2007) - suggests a broader framework for long-term engagement by social and

behavioral science with forecasting/Grand Strategy exercises.

<2> A comparatively modest, earlier "youth bulge" phenomenon in America con-
tributed to the counter-culture of the 1960s and a new shape of progressive poli-
tics. Evolving youth cultures can lead in many directions and are worth tracking.

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