

# Pathologies of intelligence-policy relations

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## 1 Excessive harmony

Mutual satisfaction leads to shared tunnel vision. Intelligence and policy fail to challenge each others' assumptions and beliefs, potentially leading to disaster.

## 2 Neglect

### Ignore the messenger

Polymakers ignore intelligence that undermines their objectives. Instead, they cherry-pick supporting information or ignore intelligence altogether.

### Self-isolation

Intelligence self-consciously avoids contact with policymakers.

## 3 Politicization

### Direct manipulation

Polymakers and staff pressure intelligence to produce specific findings. Alternately, they appoint malleable analysts.

### Indirect manipulation

Polymakers send tacit signals about acceptable and unacceptable conclusions. Implicit threats and promises accompany these signals.

### Embedded assumptions

Widely held strategic assumptions and social norms restrict the bounds of acceptable analysis.

### Intelligence subverts policy

Intelligence estimates publicly undermine policy decisions. Polymakers may ignore intelligence because they fear this kind of subversion.



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### Intelligence parochialism

Analysts tailor findings for personal or professional gain. Depending on the analyst's goals, this can lead to "intelligence to please" or subversion.

### Bureaucratic parochialism

Intelligence agencies tailor findings to support their organizational interests.

### Partisan intelligence

Political parties use intelligence issues for partisan gain, often by accusing rivals of mismanaging intelligence.

### Intelligence as scapegoat

Polymakers deride intelligence when it does not support policy decisions. In addition, intelligence is blamed for failure to predict events like surprise attacks.