

Pre-publication Draft

RESOLVING INTRACTABLE CONFLICTS

A HANDBOOK

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CONTENTS.

	Page
Part 1. Philosophy.	
Introduction.	1
Chapter 1. Conflict as a Resolvable Problem.	6
Part 2. Methodology.	
Chapter 2. Conflict Resolution as a Complex Process.	21
Chapter 3. Resolving Intractable Conflicts.	37
Part 3. Techniques.	
A Note on Terminology.	50
A Note on the Exercises.	52
Chapter 4. The Logic of a Collaborative Analytical Approach.	53
Chapter 5. Diagnosing the Situation.	58
Chapter 6. Contacts; Access to the Parties.	71
Chapter 7. Arrangements for the First Workshop.	82
Chapter 8. The Conduct of a Workshop.	92
Chapter 9. The Results of a Workshop.	112
Appendices.	
General Bibliography.	123
Practitioner Bibliography.	130
Handbook on Zandia.	140
Alternative Solutions.	146

A NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

In preparing this Handbook, we have tried to develop a professional style of language to extend, refine and (hopefully) improve the traditional terms used in the field of third-party intervention, such as 'pacific third-party intervention' or 'consultation' or 'third-party facilitation'. In particular, Conflict resolution can be used both to refer to (i) an outcome, in which the issues in an existing conflict are satisfactorily dealt with through a solution that is mutually acceptable to the parties, self sustaining in the long run and productive of a new, positive relationship between parties that were previously hostile adversaries and (ii) any process or procedure by which such an outcome is achieved.

It is our contention that resolution of a conflict (in its 'outcome' sense is best and most assuredly achieved by: a collaborative analytical, problem-solving process or approach (CAPS), which involves a set of theoretical assumptions about society in general (and conflict in particular) together with a set of procedures for intervening in a conflict situation. This is only one type of third-party intervention seeking some end to a conflict but it is distinct from adjudication and arbitration (which suggest the application of legal norms); from conciliation (which suggests an attempt focused on reducing hostility); from mediation (which suggests merely the reconciling of positions or interests); and finally from settlement (which suggests elements of imposition or coercion). The approach has many things in common with other informal and non-directive procedures for bringing about the resolution of a conflict, including facilitated dialogues, third-party consultation, interactive conflict resolution, process promoting workshops and 'Track Two' methods.

This CAPS approach aims at a resolution of the conflict, an outcome freely acceptable to all the parties involved in it. Our experiences with the approach suggest to us that it is the best way of dealing with deep-rooted and protracted conflict, which we define as recurring conflict arising from parties holding salient and (ostensibly) non-negotiable values, and exemplified by such conflicts as those in Northern Ireland or between Israelis and Palestinians, or Armenians and Azeris.

An actual application of the approach is a problem-solving exercise, covering all the phases of third-party involvement in a conflict situation: the selection of the situation itself, followed by identification of the parties and the extending of invitations to them, then holding a workshop or series of workshops, and engaging in various follow-up activities. (The sequence used as a basic pattern in this Handbook is analysis, access, preparation, workshop, re-entry and effects.)

A workshop is a lengthy, face to face meeting. It is triangular (at least) in structure, containing participants who represent (although not formally or officially) the two or more parties to the dispute, and a group of third party facilitators making up an informal panel who are applying the problem-solving approach to the exercise. The characteristic activity within the workshop is problem solving, which (in principle, at least) excludes hard bargaining, tough negotiating and destructive expressions of deep hostility. Historically, workshops have tended to be named rather randomly, either after their location - the Maryland workshops (1983-5), the CIBA workshop (1965), the Akosombo workshop (1994) or, more rarely, after the conflict itself - the Cyprus workshops (1993-5).

A project consists of a series of interlinked exercises and workshops, dealing with a single (if complex) conflict or a number of related conflicts forming what Kriesberg has described as a complex interlocking conflict (Kriesberg, 1980).

Past projects have involved both single workshop exercises:

Access Preparation **WORKSHOP** Re-entry Effects.

or a number of such workshops, held at intervals in a connected sequence:

Access **WORKSHOP 1** Preparation Re-entry

Preparation Re-entry **WORKSHOP 2**

Effects Effects

CAPS exercises can, in theory, be conducted by any institution concerned with the resolution of protracted human conflicts. However, given the fact that they are usually employed by non-governmental organizations quietly and in an informal way, they form part of the set of unofficial third-party procedures known as second track [or 'Track Two'] interventions (Diamond & McDonald, 1991). There is much debate in the field about the relationship between second track and first track procedures (formal, official diplomatic activities carried out by government agencies), particularly about the circumstances in which second track processes can successfully be replaced by first track, and vice versa.

We make no claims that these are the 'right' meanings or definitions of any of these terms. There cannot be 'right' definitions in this or any other social science field. Definitions are merely agreements about how terms will be used and what particular labels will stand for. Throughout the Handbook we have merely tried to be clear about what we mean when we use particular terms ('conflict resolution', 'workshops'); to be consistent in their use; and to be as sparing as possible with jargon.

We hope we have succeeded in this.

A NOTE ON THE EXERCISES

The practical and skills development exercises contained in each of the following chapters have all been used in a variety of university courses, but they merely represent the kind of task that can be set for scholars and students interested in developing problem-solving skills. Other scenarios can be developed to fit courses dealing with particular countries, geographical regions or arenas of conflict. We encourage colleagues to develop and use their own scenarios as appropriate.

Some of the background scenarios used in the Handbook are based directly on historical cases, while others are a composite of a variety of protracted conflicts, mostly drawn from the real world of the late twentieth century. We feel that the problems set out in the exercises are realistic and relevant, mainly on the grounds that they represent adaptations of dilemmas that have actually faced us, or some of our colleagues, in the course of practising as facilitators using collaborative, problem-solving approaches in various deep-rooted and protracted conflicts.

Each exercise can be used in a variety of ways. Each sets out a practical task to be undertaken in the context of an ongoing conflict and an effort to carry forward a successful problem-solving process. Some of the more analytical exercises lend themselves to a process whereby individuals 'take away' and think about the problem posed and possible solutions, returning to present these in writing, or orally, for comment and evaluation. However, we have found that most of them are best treated as small group discussion exercises. (Some can be restructured to involve inter-action between several decision-making groups adopting a variety of roles as factions, parties or intermediaries.) Used in this way, feedback can be provided about group process skills as well as about the pros and cons of suggested plans or solutions. Observers can evaluate such factors as a decision making group's use of limited time, its ability to delineate rapidly the central aspects of the problem, its willingness to entertain an initially wide variety of ideas and options, its capacity to keep essential records, its ability to present conclusions and recommendations succinctly and persuasively, and its general ability to work together as a cohesive and productive group.

Often, lessons about such processes have proved the most valuable to be derived from many of the exercises, and they can be added to learnings about abilities to develop a quick rapport with the encountered leaders, to make a persuasive case, to handle meetings between volatile and usually 'touchy' adversaries, and to describe sensitive conflict situations in non-provoking language.

At this point, we should emphasize that there are no absolutely right answers to many of the problems raised by the exercises. There are solutions that are more likely to achieve the desired results (whatever practitioners decide these might be) and others less likely. There are some which achieve the facilitators' immediate objectives, but contain longer-term risks. Each solution can be seen as having a set of 'pros and cons', rather than as being either 'right' or 'wrong', and a great deal of insight be gained by subsequent discussion about what advantages (disadvantages) one group's solution provides compared with others - provided this evaluation process is carried out in analytical rather than a competitive manner. We would, therefore, suggest that an important final part of each exercise should be a thorough discussion of the likely effects of suggested 'answers', not whether one is right and another wrong.

In two of the exercises presented in this work (Exercises 2.2 and 2.6??) we have suggested a number of alternative solutions, together an evaluation of their likely benefits and dangers. However, we have refrained from presenting 'model answers' to any other exercises on the grounds that this could discourage others from thinking about, and crafting, their own (hopefully) realistic solutions to the dilemmas they face as aspiring intermediaries (constrained by circumstances and limited resources) in - for example - the Lusitanian conflict, or those within the Republic of Zandia.

Finally, we should emphasize that, while the exercises in this Handbook are specifically orientated towards initiatives undertaken by unofficial, 'Track Two' third parties - facilitators, consultants, private intermediaries - they also focus on skills that generally are central to the task of mediators and conciliators from international organizations and governmental diplomatic services. Opportunities and approaches may differ, depending upon the nature and affiliation of 'the' third party, but certain analytical, organizational and procedural skills are common to all. We hope these exercises both illustrate and illuminate these commonalities and enable users to practise these basic skills.

INTRODUCTION

This Handbook is an expanded and revised version of one originally published in 1997 but its origins go back well beyond the 1990's to the beginnings of academic efforts to establish both a discipline and a practice of conflict analysis and resolution. In other words, to the start of the movement to link theories about the origins and dynamics of social conflicts – particularly protracted and violent ones – to practical interventions aimed at finding lasting, non-violent solutions to such contests.

In some ways, the book is the result of more than thirty years of academic research, originally of an abstract and theoretical kind but increasingly, since the 1980s, involving a variety of interventions into protracted, deep-rooted conflicts, made at least partly with the objective of testing out the usefulness of that theoretical work. The basic ideas about “conflict resolution” it presents largely grew out of the collaborative efforts of a research group, which began its work in the mid-1960's at University College, London, being then officially entitled 'The Centre for the Analysis of Conflict', and known to its members as 'CAC'.

1. Origins

CAC was formed in 1966. Around that time, the political and social sciences were undergoing a 'behavioral' revolution, which threw into question many of the assumptions that had previously led people to regard conflict, violence and warfare as inevitable. Its members were all social scientists, but trained in different disciplines and sharing a conviction that prevailing ideas about social and international conflict were inadequate in some cases and, in others, just plain wrong. Within this generally critical framework, members of the Centre attempted to promote three objectives:

- (1) To improve understanding of conflict and in particular the politics of conflict.
- (2) To develop contacts between academics and political decision-makers, so that new theories could reflect real-world experience.
- (3) To create stronger ties between theory and practice, so that the ideas of social science could become relevant and usable.

Early studies led to a series of tentative propositions, on the basis of which later, practical work evolved. Primarily, it seemed then - and it still seems - that the shared features of conflict, at all levels of human society, were more significant than the differences, although there were many of those. Common patterns were displayed, both within and between such disparate categories as interpersonal disputes, community strife, rebellion against authority, and even coercion between states. In other words, although differences existed, generalisations and – hence - general theories about conflict were not merely possible, but helpful.

Turning from conflict to its various 'opposite' conditions, existing insights from the social sciences into stability, peace, justice, progress and legitimized authority demonstrated that a significant growth of knowledge was producing images of a peaceful society in ever-increasing variety and complexity. It became apparent that, however repetitive the pathologies of destructive conflict might be, the physiology of a healthy human society could take on many different shapes. Theories of conflict, then, could be cautiously employed in the search for remedies and solutions. *A priori* blueprints for peaceful societies could not. Scholars and researchers might be able to illuminate or understand a conflict, but *only the parties could finally resolve it*.

At that time, then, there seemed a real possibility that academic thinking about the nature of protracted conflict might be useful to the leaders of parties actually in conflict. There must be some knowledge and some processes that would help to alleviate the waste, misery, destruction and death so often caused by violent conflict in all its forms. What seemed to be needed was a modified version of 'mediation'.

Work then developed through library research, field expeditions, discussions with scholars in Britain and other countries and, eventually, practical initiatives. Early experiments involved some immersion into real world, ongoing conflicts, often by visiting the scene of the action and inviting spokesmen for mutually hostile parties to participate in “academic seminars”.

Slowly, it began to be recognised that conflict *analysis* and conflict *resolution* were closely inter-connected aspects of the same activity: the thorough analysis of a conflict is the first, major step towards its resolution. The analytical seminars held at CAC came to be called *problem solving workshops*, while the modified form of mediation developed in such meetings became the *facilitation* of conflict resolution. The workshops were *analytical*, in that the initial task for those involved was to analyse and understand the conflict, and *collaborative* because they involved adversaries jointly in a search for solutions

2. Difficulties and Dilemmas

By the early 1980s, the characteristics of *collaborative, analytical problem solving* [CAPS] as an alternative to traditional mediation had become sharp and clear. Ideally, and to be fully effective, problem-solving initiatives needed to take place early in the development of a conflict, not delayed until the hostile parties had soured their relationship by acts of violence, damage and sacrifice. The aim, at best, was the avoidance of violence, not its mitigation. To be seen as relevant, problem solving needed to be pro-active and constructive, not merely passive and bland. To be acceptable to the parties in conflict, the initiative also needed to be genuinely neutral, at least in the sense that it had to be non-judgmental, non-partisan and, above all, non-coercive. To have lasting benefit, collaborative analytical problem solving needed to be continuously involved, through all the phases of a process of conflict resolution, including the follow-up period in the aftermath of any agreement.

There was also the question of who could conduct problem-solving exercises, and where. From the CAC experience it seemed as if academic conflict analysts, working from their own educational institutions, might well optimise conditions. A university's everyday processes of research and commentary on society and its problems can, and sometimes do, sound early warning bells about impending conflict. Social change, incompatible pressures and rising tensions could be monitored and analysed. In principle, at least, academics could turn out to be ideal facilitators because they were expected to try - even if they often failed - to suppress their private wishes in favor of dispassionate theories and formal techniques of analyzing 'the facts'. Social science, with its systematic observations of the properties common to all conflict situations, could serve as the basis for constructive comments on any given conflict - though the comments should be about processes and ideas, not about values or 'solutions'. A campus could be an ideally neutral setting in which to discuss hostile relationships, because the 'ivory tower' atmosphere could help to set its inhabitants apart from the passions inevitably felt close to the core of a conflict. Nowadays, of course, a whole set of professional - and, in some cases commercial - institutions have developed, offering facilitation and problem-solving services, while conflict-resolution practices have become much in demand with international organizations, such as the United Nations (UN), the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the Organization of American States (OAS), as well as in some diplomatic services.

Over this early 'development' period, the CAC group encountered difficulties, objections and problems, both in developing basic ideas and then putting them into practice. Most were obvious to us, and others were pointed out when various members of CAC began to publish the results of our work. [See Burton 1969; and 1972; De Reuck, 1974]. Three criticisms, in particular, were of concern then, and remain contentious.

The first criticism is that peace and justice contradict each other. A conflict, at any level in society, usually involves a struggle for some form of "justice". Stop it before it has run its course, and that act of intervention merely extends the domination of those who originally were dominant or who were winning at that particular time. This means that both traditional mediation and problem solving run the danger of being conservative activities; they tend to support whichever party is more powerful at the outset.

The second criticism is that collaborative, analytical problem solving denies the reality of conflict, by laying too much stress on misperception and subjectivity. It cannot allow for the genuine, objective and inevitable clashes of interest that are a natural part of the human condition. In other words, at least some conflicts are, by their very nature, irresolvable so that problem-solving approaches are doomed to failure. [This issue is taken up again and discussed at some length in the first Chapter of this Handbook.]

A third criticism is that any problem-solving approach amounts to little more than "appeasement" wrapped up in fancy academic language. Its message to decent, law-abiding citizens, it is argued, is that they should simply give in to aggression and violence, even on the part of unrepresentative minorities.

These are powerful objections, and they have been taken seriously throughout the history of the CAC group. Certainly, nothing in this Handbook is intended to brush them aside. But they do relate to the position from which this work started in the 1960s and 1970s, not to the present state of knowledge in the field of conflict analysis and resolution. Later research and writings from CAC members and others have discussed them in detail (Banks, 1984; Mitchell, 1981; Burton, 1987). The ground is gone over yet again in the first three chapters of this present work, which deal with the philosophy and methodology of problem solving.

In short, it seems reasonably clear that most of these criticisms are simply mistaken and based upon misconceptions about what problem solving seeks to do. [See the early debate between Yalem, (1971) and Mitchell, (1973)]. But discussions about these and many other contentious issues continue to reverberate throughout the field of conflict analysis and resolution - and are likely to do so for some time to come.

However, most are not arguments against the possibility and desirability of mediation or analytical problem solving as such. Instead, they should be seen as cautions about the necessity of doing it properly, with due concern for clearly understood values, with exceptional care about the non-directive role of third parties, and with the greatest possible sensitivity to what is at stake for those involved in the struggle.

Chapters 1, 2 and 3 outline some of the reasoning that has led to the conclusion that these objections can be overcome. The Handbook, however, is not intended to supply full-scale justification for a problem-solving approach, either philosophically or empirically. It has a separate function to fulfill - as a straightforward guide to processes and techniques for those wishing to apply the problem-solving method to actual conflict situations.

3. Developments

While the CAC group in London was developing its initial ideas and taking some careful steps towards implementing them, parallel developments were taking place elsewhere, all of which had major impacts on the development of theorising about conflicts and on the practice of conflict resolution. In retrospect, three broad trends can be discerned. In three separate but mutually connected arenas.

First, thinking about conflict resolution, conflict management or alternative dispute resolution (ADR) experienced a boom during the 1980's and 90's, in terms both of its literature and its practical application in many countries. As the bibliographies in this work indicate, the past twenty five years have witnessed the maturing of conflict analysis as an inter-disciplinary field. There has been a considerable output from sociology, combined with the flowing of contributions in social psychology and psychotherapy, substantial work in political science and anthropology, successful commercialization in business studies, and even some serious interest within the conservative redoubt of academic international relations.

Secondly, on the organizational side, mediation and the many techniques associated with its use in interpersonal and intergroup disputes (such as conciliation, counseling, arbitration, reconciliation and reparation) have rapidly become institutionalized, initially in Europe and North America but now globally. The use of these approaches is now widely established in the areas of family breakdown, community conflict, race relations, environmental dispute resolution and industrial strife. A strong institutional thrust has been given to the movement with the emergence to public prominence of such bodies as ACAS (the national Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service) in the U K, and of the American Arbitration Association, the Federal Conciliation & Mediation Service, and the Society of Professionals in Dispute Resolution in the USA. Professional associations have been set up to encourage research, communication and publicity, such as the British Mediation UK, the American Association for Conflict Resolution (ACR), the Alliance for Conflict Transformation and the Alliance for International Conflict Prevention and Resolution.

In other regions of the world - Africa, Latin America, Asia, the Middle East - interest has been aroused in alternative, non-coercive processes of conflict resolution, often with a corresponding move to re-discover and utilize traditional and indigenous means of dealing with conflicts, rather than rely on 'imported models'.

Most of these developments are, of course, strictly domestic. They are ways to deal with conflict within the state, where the mediatory effort is often initiated by government itself, takes place (usually) within a supportive framework of law and order, and can generally count on the reinforcement provided by a network of shared values. But the vision of the CAC group was always that the scope of conflict resolution, in its collaborative, analytical problem-solving form, could be extended much farther, from the domestic realm to transnational and international disputes. In this arena, too, there are signs that progress is being made, despite the generally primitive nature of international relations. Initially, these signs mostly appeared in the world of ideas rather than the world of practice, but in the past two decades they have spread into the border zone between ideas and practice: the zone where new institutions are created. Conflict research and resolution institutes, both official and unofficial, have been established, sometimes with government support, in a number of countries. Initiatives took place first in Scandinavia in the 1960s, and have spread to other parts of Western Europe, to Canada, South Africa and Australia, and to the USA where the federal government established the United States Institute of Peace in 1984 and, within the State Department itself, the Office for Conflict Management and Mitigation, established in 2004. In 1993 the Organisation of African Unity established its own conflict-resolution department or 'mechanism', and this tradition has been passed on to the recently established African Union, with its Peace and Security Council. The Department of Political Affairs at the UN is currently developing alternative conflict resolution processes under the Secretary-General's policy of encouraging conflict prevention through peacekeeping, peacemaking and peacebuilding.

Thirdly, similar signs of growth are evident in the realm of practice. While CAC's practical experience as conflict 'intervenor', (or 'consultants' or 'facilitators') grew, it became evident that this was part of a broad, global movement that sought to apply a range of innovative and basically 'non-directive' techniques to coping with human conflicts at all levels of society, from the inter-individual to the international. CAC's analytical, problem solving approach had things in common with the kind of 'process consultation' practiced in organizations by such pioneers as Richard Walton, or Robert Blake and Jane Mouton; or with Roger Fisher and Bill Ury's ideas about 'principled negotiation'; or with the techniques of 'facilitated dialogue' developed by Jim Laue and his colleagues at the University of Missouri; or with the whole range of processes that emerged in the 1980s under the now familiar title of 'ADR'. Most strikingly, a very similar approach appeared to have been used in the informal dialogues between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) that took place in Norway during 1993, leading to the Israel/PLO Accord on Gaza and Jericho and in a number of other resolution processes employed in trying to resolve protracted and dangerously violent conflicts.

It still seems to be the case that the CAC problem solving "model" does have some major differences with many others (perhaps mainly because of the nature of the conflicts to which it has been applied) but also that there are certainly common principles and aims involved, as well as parallels, if not precise similarities, of technique. Hence, the principles, practices and skills described in this Handbook are very broadly applicable to a wide range of third party 'intervenor' processes, so the book can usefully be employed by people using a variety of facilitative procedures and techniques.

4. Pedagogy

Currently, one common belief among the bulk of researchers, consultants and facilitators is that the skills of a successful third-party intervenor and facilitator can be learnt and taught. Not everyone has to go through the long drawn out (and often difficult) business of learning through twenty years' experience of practical intervention as a practising third party. Hence, in the mid-1980s when the original "London Group" at CAC had moved on from the original centre in London an effort was made to draft collectively what was intended to be a straightforward guide to procedure for those wishing to apply collaborative problem-solving methods to ongoing conflicts, especially those that were complex and protracted. (The underlying *theory* is explored at length in publications listed in the bibliographies, which an interested reader can consult.)

At the same time as this work of drafting a practical guide began, many of the original CAC group began to plan and teach practical, skill-development courses for the students at a wide variety of colleges and universities. Often, these began as extensions of short training courses that had begun to be widely used on the 1980's so as to develop an extensive cadre of trained community mediators and facilitators to deal with local disputes. Of necessity, there had to be training materials for these courses much of which had to consist of realistic and practical for exercises to help students develop their own skills and approaches to conflict resolution.

The first edition of this Handbook, then, was the outcome of this attempt to introduce a practical "training and skills development" component to some of the new courses in 'Conflict Analysis and Resolution' that increasingly began to be established in universities and colleges in the late 1980s and 1990s. Many of these were masters degree courses aimed at mature, or mid-career students who had some experience of the prevalence of conflict in their working and community lives, and the damage such conflict could cause if it took a malign turn and was not handled in a positive and productive manner.

The Handbook that eventually emerged was thus similar in intent to the many, practical training manuals that appeared in the mid-1980's (for example, Beer, 1986; Fitzduff, 1988), but with two major differences. The first was that the work focused on the analytical and practical skills that seemed invaluable in dealing with protracted, deep-rooted and violent conflicts involving whole countries, societies or communities, such as the Greek Cypriot/ Turkish Cypriot conflict on Cyprus, or the protracted intercommunity conflicts in Northern Ireland or in Sri Lanka. An underlying assumption was that conflict-resolution practices in such complex, protracted and frequently violent conflicts require a somewhat different approach to that appropriate for disputes between neighbours, or landlords and tenants, or even unions and management.

Secondly, the work was aimed at college and university students, and it assumed that learning, training and skills development could proceed at a slightly less hectic pace than that demanded of participants in a concentrated, two- to three-day workshop. The original Handbook assumed that those using it would have time to undertake background reading, as well as involve themselves in its various exercises and skills-building tasks. Perhaps more importantly, it also assumed that analysis and thinking are a central part

of any third-party intervention, and that both require some background familiarity with theories of conflict and its resolution.

Finally, it assumed that it would be possible, at some stage of the course, for those taking it to indulge in a number of continuous exercises, some lasting longer than the conventional weekend, in order to experience some of the practical problems of third-party facilitation, mediation or conciliation - problems of fatigue, planning and timing errors, non-availability of key participants, lack of crucial resources and many of the practical difficulties that have to be overcome in conducting a successful problem-solving exercise in the real world.

These assumptions have been carried over into this revised version of the original Handbook. The work can be used as a basis for introducing potential intervenors and facilitators very rapidly to some of the skills that are needed for planning, launching and conducting analytical problem solving initiatives. It can form the central focus of a short, weekend course. It can be mined for individual skills building exercises. However, it is best used as a component of a course that combines the study of theories of social conflict with the analysis of methods of conflict resolution and some experience of the practical application of such methods. The more time for thinking and reflection that accompanies the development and exercise of practical skills, the better.

5. Debts

As was acknowledged in the first version of this Handbook, a large number of people have contributed ideas, materials and models, starting with the original members of CAC and their many colleagues and collaborators. It seems unnecessary to repeat the long and distinguished list again in this revised work. Moreover, to add further names of those who have contributed significantly to this field in the last decade since the original version of the Handbook was completed would necessitate adding several pages to this already far-too-long introduction. However, special mention needs to be made of five friends and colleagues who have contributed thought, effort and practice to the field of conflict analysis and resolution much to the advancement of the field. Without the efforts of this quintet of scholar practitioners, the field would be less rich in ideas and challenges, less based upon multiple practical experiences of collaborative and analytical problem solving initiatives, less recognised and accepted by practitioners in governments, international organisations and foundations, and far less lively. Hence this second version of the Handbook is dedicated to Professor Herbert Kelman, in at the very beginning and still working as a distinguished scholar-practitioner; to Ambassador Hal Saunders and Ambassador John McDonald, who saw the potential of the approach from their original positions within traditional diplomatic systems; to Professor Ron Fisher, who continues tirelessly to promote the ideas and institutionalise the practice; and to Professor John Paul Lederach, who carries on with the practical work while worrying the field with new intellectual challenges so that it does not become too complacent. A pleasure to have worked with all of you.

Finally, it is also dedicated to my former students, many of whom have gone on to use at least some of these ideas and techniques in their work with governments, international non-governmental organisations, foundations, human rights organisations and universities throughout the world. All of them helped develop the ideas and the exercises contained in this second version of the Handbook, a work as much theirs as mine. It was the students at ICAR and other centres and universities who worked through the tasks contained in the following pages, grumbled about them, criticized them, suggested improvements, and threw several out as irrelevant. The work they have put in may have benefited themselves in making them more thoughtful and more sensitive intervenors; it has certainly benefited their teachers.

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CHAPTER 1.

CONFLICT AS A RESOLVABLE PROBLEM.

Well before talking about the practicalities of techniques and methods, there has to be a brief philosophical discussion about the nature of conflict "resolution", what exactly it means and whether talking about resolving a conflict makes any sense. This is particularly so because, over the last three decades, the concept of "conflict resolution" has become an increasingly familiar and fashionable one in discussions of long running, intractable conflicts such as those in Sri Lanka, Cyprus or Northern Ireland, or of [ostensibly] newer conflicts, such as those in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. The concept's constant use by scholars, practitioners, journalists and decision makers justifies a rather careful examination, on the grounds that it is increasingly being misused by many who employ the term to stand simply for an ending of violence or a precarious compromise agreement supported by outside sanctions, either positive or negative. Conflict "resolution" must, surely, mean something more than this.

It is necessary to start by acknowledging that our rather loose, everyday employment of the term "conflict resolution" masks two rather different, if related conceptions:

[1] "Conflict resolution" as an outcome or an end state - as in the solution to a problem - when a conflict is ended by the removal of the goal incompatibility and the development of a new relationship [or pattern of interaction] between erstwhile adversaries at least over those issues previously in dispute; or

[2] "Conflict resolution" as a process, procedure or set of activities through which hostile and often warring adversaries are enabled to achieve a situation in which salient goal incompatibilities have, indeed, been removed and [perhaps] replaced by complementary goals.

This Chapter concentrates on the first of these conceptions of conflict resolution, while subsequent chapters take up the idea of conflict resolution as a process. Its main argument is that, if the term implies anything it is, surely, that at least in theory a conflict is a phenomenon for which some solution can be discovered or constructed, following which activity the conflict no longer exists - or, in a weaker argument, no longer exists in its original form. (1) If no solution to a conflict is possible, even in theory, then the practical search for a "resolution" of that conflict is doomed even before it begins and we are left with the alternatives of reducing the levels of violence via a [temporary] truce, or of seeking some compromise settlement. If this is, indeed the case, then we can only utilise procedures which, at best, lead to conflict reduction or mitigation and ultimately to a compromise solution whereby the conflict in question is settled, often temporarily but not resolved in any final sense.

The theme of the Chapter is, then, a simple one. Scholars talk about "conflict resolution" and contrast it with the reduction, amelioration, avoidance, management or settlement of conflict. In what sense is conflict a "resolvable" phenomenon ? What do scholars mean when talking about a conflict being "resolved" ? (2)

1. The Traditional View; Conflict as Irresolvable and Inevitable.

The idea that conflicts are, in principle, resolvable is one which contrasts sharply with a dominant set of assumptions in much of social science, and particularly in the study of International Relations, which has the analysis and understanding of major international and transnational conflicts as its central focus (3). This dominant "worldview" is one which has as its central themes;

[1] inherent scarcity of desired "goods", which may be temporarily alleviated;

[2] competition, leading to conflict and frequently to coercion and violence;

[3] compromise and negotiated agreement as the only principles for settling an inherently irresolvable situation.

1.1. Conflicts as Constant Sum Situations.

A fruitful way of illustrating this basic - and very widespread - model of society and its conflicts is to recall the biblical story of Solomon confronting the conflict between the two women both claiming a baby as their own and [in his "wisdom"] ostensibly deciding that the best way of dealing with the conflict lay in the compromise solution of dividing the baby physically between the two adversaries in equal halves. [See Kings I, 3:16-28] After all, there was only one baby [scarcity] and a compromise based upon equal shares of the "good" in dispute [equality] might have seemed a fair settlement [a "compromise"] of the conflict.

Solomonic wisdom, on this occasion, consisted in assuming that the true mother would not be able to accept this "solution" and would thus reveal herself by abandoning all claim to the "good" in dispute, while the imposter would accept the proffered compromise. With this additional information available to the royal decision maker, the baby could then be restored intact to its rightful parent - a win-lose solution based upon accepted rules of justice.

Leaving aside the story's inherent improbability, [to which I return below], it does illuminate some widespread assumptions about the nature of the political world, about conflicts and about the limited set of principles available to handle them.

Essentially, there is a widespread view that conflicts are, by their nature, zero- or constant-sum phenomena. On occasions they are over goods that are scarce and inherently indivisible [babies, cats or cities]; on others, they are over goods that are scarce but divisible [cheese, cash or land]. The world is, in Lester Thurow's term, a "zero-sum society". [Thurow 1971] It consists of scarce objects of conflict [cats or cheese] which differ in the extent to which they can be divided, exchanged or substituted for; and the ease of so doing.

1.2. The Constant Sum Paradigm and Types of "Solution".

If one accepts this dominant paradigm, with its constant-sum view of the nature of social conflict, then one is forced to the conclusion that only compromise settlements [what might be termed solutions of division] are logically possible outcomes for conflicts, with divisions in which a winner takes all and a loser gets nothing simply being extreme cases of this type of ending (4). What the Duchess says to Alice in Wonderland applies equally to the real world of intractable conflicts in which we live; "The more there is of yours, the less there is of mine !"

The importance and influence of this fundamental set of traditional assumptions about the nature of conflict cannot really be under-estimated. It dominates current efforts to deal with, bargain about, negotiate over or otherwise terminate many contemporary, protracted conflicts. It reveals itself very clearly in disputes which are defined as being "over sovereignty", an abstraction that is treated as though it had an indivisible reality. Hence, conflicts about - for example - sovereignty over the region of Ngomo Karabagh are treated as though the only outcomes could be the achievement of undisputed sovereignty over this territory by Armenia, by Azerbaijan, or by the current inhabitants of that territory; or by compromising and dividing the territory between the two countries in some proportions which might be acceptable to the parties to this intractable conflict (5).

Within this traditional constant sum framework, a number of variants of, and improvements on this basic "solutions of division" model have been developed and most extensively discussed under the label of integrative agreements. First mentioned in Mary Parker Follett's work in the 1920's [Follett; 1940] and extensively discussed in the 1960's in Walton & McKersie's pioneering work on industrial conflict [1965], these agreements are so called because they reconcile ["integrate"] the interests of the adversaries; Their chief characteristic is that they "yield higher joint benefit" for the parties involved in a negotiation. Pruitt [1986] and others contrast this type of agreement with simple "compromises" in which "...the parties concede along an obvious dimension to some middle ground..."[ibid. p.463] and argue that the discovery of such solutions involves creativity and the development of novel alternatives, although some cases may use already known alternatives "...whose joint value becomes apparent during the controversy..." [ibid.]

A word of caution regarding the use of the term "integrative solution" and the precise form such solutions can take is in order here, however. As Gerald Wetlauffer [1996] has perceptively pointed out, some versions of apparently integrative solution are merely more complex forms of distribution that fail to increase the benefit of the settlement to both or all the parties involved, even though they may increase the overall amount of benefit derived from that settlement. In this regard, it is important to make a distinction between increased individual benefit to one party [the Duchess gets more and Alice gets less]; an increase in the overall or aggregate benefit derived from the settlement [Alice gets more than the Duchess's original offer, and values that incremental gain more than the Duchess values the equivalent incremental loss]; and an increase in joint benefit [Alice and the Duchess - somehow - increase the level of benefit both derive from some new settlement] (6).

It seems reasonably clear that it is only this last type of benefit increase is meant by most analysts who write about "integrative" solutions. Leaving aside cases where one party simply gains individual benefit at the expense of the other, there are a variety of other opportunities for finding types of solution in which alternative arrangements increase the benefit to one party by far more than the equivalent loss to another, thereby "creating value" or "increasing the pie" in an aggregate sense. However, if the essential feature of an integrative solution is that both [or all] parties must have their level of benefit increased, then many solutions that increase aggregate benefit by exchanging low valued losses for highly valued gains turn out to be fundamentally distributive.

However, there remain a number of ways in which even solutions involving division can increase joint benefit and thus qualify as "integrative". The first of these variants on the basic model of division might be termed solutions of substitution.

In this model, one party gains its own objectives - sometimes in their entirety - at the expense of the other, but compensates the second with alternatives of a roughly equivalent value. As Pruitt argues [1983], there are three basic types of substitutions. In conflicts that are about a variety of issues, one way of producing a settlement that can increase joint gains over a simple process of division, is for one party to gain on one set of issues by yielding to its adversary on another which the latter values more highly than it does the first. This is known colloquially as log-rolling and in an ideal world, an integrative solution is reached by one Party, A, letting Party B have goods that B values but A does not, while B lets A have goods that A values but B does not. Wetlaufer talks about "...unbundling the parties' interests, identifying issues that might be valued differently, and then engaging in the appropriate form of integrative bargaining when multiple issues are differently valued..." [1996 p.393] In other words, the Queen and Alice gain things they value highly and allow the other to have things they value less, so that both increase their own level of benefit gained from the solution. Even though such strategies may work in theory, however, the real world being somewhat less than ideal and the most intractable conflicts usually being over goods that both sides value highly, log rolling to find an acceptable package that increases both sides' satisfaction as against some hypothetical, 50/50 split on all value dimensions is by no means easy.

A second version of "solutions of substitution" is one in which the party which gains most from an agreement provides compensatory goods or payments to the side which loses most. As the compensation in such cases is often in goods remote from those at the basis of the conflict, Pruitt refers to this type of agreement as involving nonspecific compensation - colloquially, as a party being "repaid in unrelated coin" [1986 p.466].

Wetlaufer points out that, even when dealing with apparently indivisible goods the strategy of non-specific compensation might be made possible by introducing non-material considerations, such as risk or time. These could be used to off-set material losses and increase the benefit of the solution to a party that might, for example, be risk averse [through the gainer offering a warranty or guarantee against some feared event] or pressed for time [through the gainer promising to deliver a good earlier than originally agreed]. Such actions could increase the benefit of the solution to the less successful party and thus ensure the creation of joint benefits that also increase the aggregate benefits arising from the solution. Unfortunately, in many intractable conflicts acceptable substitute goods, whether material, intangible or symbolic, are in short supply and frequently have to be supplied in the form of side payments by outside parties.

The last type of substitution involves the successful party minimising the loser's loss by compensating directly the losses suffered. Pruitt calls this form of direct compensation cost cutting, and defines it as a situation in which "...the party who concedes receives something in return that satisfies the precise values frustrated..." [ibid p.468] The costs are actually cancelled out rather than being offset by other types of benefit. A good example of this process might be the United States building two new air bases within pre-1967 Israeli borders to make up for the loss of the air bases in Sinai that Israel had returned to Egypt as a result of the Camp David Agreement - an example that again illustrates the fact that, in many intractable conflicts, direct as well as nonspecific compensatory payments often come from well endowed third parties (7).

The second major variant on simple division involves settlements that take the form of solutions of expansion, whereby the amount of the good in dispute is increased [by joint efforts over time] so that adversaries can fulfil their original goals via the increment. Fundamentally, of course, the settlement still involves a problem of dividing some newly expanded amount of the good between parties whose interests - presumably - remain maximising their "take" of that good, so that there continues to be room for competition over who gets the greater share of the increment, and on what grounds. However, the usual argument of those advocating such an outcome as a form of integrative solutions is that the cooperative relationships developed during the joint effort of producing more of the good, the practice of working as partners rather than as adversaries, the habit of joint problem solving as part of the overall endeavour and, finally, the greater availability of the good itself, will all make the process of deciding on final shares much easier. Pruitt argues that this and other forms of integrated agreement will prove more stable in the long run, more productive of successful conflict anticipation and management initiatives in future, and of greater benefit to the broader community. [ibid p.464] There is much evidence to support such conclusions as regards organisational and industrial conflicts, and even some from the local community level. Unfortunately, such an approach seems a little utopian in situations like Sri Lanka or former-Yugoslavia.

In spite of the possibility in principle of integrative solutions that, in some manner, compensate adversaries for goals left unattained or hold out the promise of even larger gains through cooperation at some time in the future, my general argument about dominant paradigms remains a powerful one. Moreover, from a practical viewpoint, even the theoretical possibility of such solutions usually appears utopian. Given the dominance of the "constant-sum" framework, it is almost universally assumed that only a narrow range of practical solutions to intractable conflicts are possible. Conflicts can, at best, be temporarily managed or [hopefully less temporarily] settled through the adversaries finally agreeing to accept less than they had originally desired, or agreeing that some additional goods will make up for the shortfall between their goals and aspirations and the benefits they actually achieve through the solution. If this acceptance becomes less final at some

stage in the future, when circumstances and opportunities change, then this is merely another regrettable concomitant of the world of conflict as it necessarily is. Solutions and settlements, being compromises or compensations, are necessarily temporary, and the range of solutions is limited to those summarised in Table 1.

TYPE OF SOLUTION.	MAIN CHARACTERISTICS.	TYPICAL EXAMPLE.
Solutions of Division	Compromise and sharing	Division of land: India 1947
Solutions of Substitution.	Compensation - Log-rolling - Non specific compensation - Cost cutting	"Land for Peace"
Solutions of Expansion.	Increase via collaborative effort	Industrial Productivity agreement

TABLE 1. CONVENTIONAL TYPES OF SOLUTION IN INTRACTABLE CONFLICTS

In this conventional framework of ideas, of course, the very possibility of resolving a conflict becomes questionable at best, and inherently impossible at worst, which helps to explain the frequent misinterpretation of what advocates of the idea of conflict resolution are saying when they talk about "resolutionary" outcomes being feasible.

2. What Conflict Resolution is Not.

If conflict researchers take a different view from the traditional one outlined above and argue that, at least in principle it is possible to resolve even the most intractable conflict, what do they mean by this statement ?

There is a great deal of confusion and misunderstanding about this position, [much of which is the fault of conflict researchers themselves] and it will be necessary to return to first principles to try to clarify the sense on which the term "conflict resolution" may properly be used. It might help to begin by emphasising what conflict researchers are not saying, when they claim that conflicts are "inherently resolvable", as they are often accused of making extravagant claims for conflict resolution when they are doing nothing of the sort.

2.1. Resolution of all Conflicts; A Conflict-Free Society ?

It should be clear that conflict researchers, when they talk about "the resolution of conflict", are not saying that all conflicts in a social system can be resolved, producing a wholly conflict free society. Apart from doubts about the desirability of such a situation [conflicts have clearly positive aspects, well outlined by Coser (1956), Burton (1969) and Augsburger (1992) among many others], conflicts are likely to remain inherent and frequent in any societies which contain diverse populations with different value systems, competing demands and inadequate procedures for coping with problems arising from a mismatch between demands and resources. Conflict will not disappear as a social phenomenon, although we may learn to cope with it better.

All that conflict researchers claim when they talk about "conflict resolution" is that particular examples of conflicts can be resolved, although it is not unlikely that they will be replaced by other, equally intractable examples. Conflict researchers do not expect to work themselves out of a job. (8)

2.2. Resolution as the Cessation of Violence.

A second but increasingly less common interpretation of the nature of "conflict resolution" is that it simply implies that people have stopped using violence against each other in pursuit of their goals. Conflict researchers have long argued that the absence of violence does not imply the absence of possibly intense levels of conflict, and that groups,

communities and even whole societies can be characterised by latent conflicts, which are either suppressed or deterred, or simply waiting to emerge into protest, overt coercion and later violence once groups wanting incompatible futures have been mobilised and organised. Similarly, peace researchers have drawn the distinction between "positive" peace, which denotes that a society is [relatively] harmonious and integrated; and "negative" peace where a society is divided by fundamental disputes and deep antagonisms, yet violence is held in check perhaps by the dominance of one party or perhaps through the fear of external sanctions.

Recent history is full of cases that illustrate the stubborn continuation of latent conflicts characterised - often for long periods of time - by the absence of widespread violent behaviour in pursuit of denied goals. All illustrate the point that the absence or cessation of violence does not mean that conflicts do not exist or have been finally resolved. "Peaceful" societies that have suddenly erupted into massive violence, like former Yugoslavia support the first argument. Numerous broken truces and negotiation processes that remain deadlocked reinforce the second. The failed "peace process" and return to violence in Angola show that UN efforts to resolve the MPLA and UNITA struggle have been unsuccessful, in spite of the cessation of violence between the adversaries during the late 1990's. The ten year peaceful "settlement" between the first and the second Sudanese civil wars from 1972 to 1982 clearly failed to deal adequately with underlying issues, tensions and suspicions between adversaries from the North and South of that country. Cyprus has been characterised by an almost complete absence of violence since 1974, but there are few who would argue that the conflict between the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot communities on the island has even begun to be "resolved."

Clearly, then, changing the antagonists' behaviour from violence to something different is not the same as "resolving" the conflict, especially if the suspicion, mistrust and fear on both sides continue to exist and lay the groundwork for future violence. This is not to be taken as an argument that the cessation of violence makes no contribution to resolving a conflict, of course. For conflict researchers, ending violence is usually a necessary preliminary to the search for a solution to the issues in the conflict, and thus is usually regarded as an integral part of a "peace process". Keeping the peace and ending violence provides an opportunity for the parties to deal with their differences, disagreements and doubts and perhaps to remove some of the stereotypes and negative images which are another barrier to resolving the conflict in which they arise.

2.3. Resolution as Removing "Misperceptions" ?

However, again when talking about "conflict resolution", conflict researchers do not simply mean that all conflicts are based upon "misperceptions" - of the other party, its goals and intentions and of the opportunities for compromise. Quite often it is too easily assumed that all that conflict research is saying about "resolving conflicts" is that there are many misperceptions involved in all conflicts - particularly protracted conflicts - and if these can only be "corrected", then the conflict will be resolved, as those involved come to realise they have nothing to fear from, and much in common with, each other.

In fact, most conflict analysts would agree with the first part of this initial statement. In intense, protracted and violent conflicts, adversaries do become subjected to distorting psychological processes and consistently misperceive each other. The other side is demonised and distorted and all the evils which are regular concomitants of protracted, violent conflict ascribed to the other's planned and intentional malevolence. Negotiation, discussion, even contact with representatives of such an entity come to be out of the question. Coercion and victory become - at least during many stages of the conflict - the only strategies that can be contemplated. Even long after some compromise settlement is achieved, residues of hatred and fear remain to poison post-agreement relations.

Hence, part of the overall process of "conflict resolution" frequently involves the removal of some of the grosser perceptual distortions and over-simplifications that commonly affect parties in conflict, and the building up of reassurance and trust, at least to the level where some members of an adversary party recognise that it might be possible to discuss the conflict, and even to seek a settlement with some members of the enemy. This is often a long drawn out process [it took over 25 years for some Israelis to be ready to talk to some members of the PLO and vice versa]. My colleague Herbert Kelman refers to it as "seeking a valid negotiating partner". It can be the first stage of a slow and cautious reconciliation process, such as occurred between French and Germans after 1945, and might yet occur between Israelis and Palestinians following the signing of the formal peace agreements of the mid-1990's - although the prospects look increasingly dim at this time of writing.

Unfortunately, this process of "harmonising perceptions" is not enough, in and of itself, to constitute "conflict resolution", and might be better classified as another type of conflict amelioration. Even if perceptions can become less distorted, fears and mistrust lessened, and errors about an adversary's "hidden agenda" of long term goals removed, the conflict is hardly resolved in any final sense. The issues underlying the incompatible goals will remain, waiting to be dealt with.

3. Resolution and Mutually Incompatible Goals.

So far, I have argued that (1) none of the above interpretations captures what conflict analysts mean when they talk about the inherent resolvability of conflict, or about conflict being a resolvable problem; (2) minimising the level of inter-party violence and coercion is perhaps best regarded as conflict reduction; and (3) reducing the fear, hatred and mistrust between parties is also best regarded as ameliorating some of the worst psychological effects of a conflict.

In presenting these arguments I have tried to give some indication what conflict analysts do not mean when they talk about resolving a conflict. However, let us assume that we have arrived at a point in a particular protracted conflict [say a struggle for political power and office in an ethnically divided country] when we face a situation in which:

- [1] The level of violence and coercive behaviour has been reduced to bearable levels;
- [2] The leaders [at least] of the adversaries are no longer subject to massive perceptual distortions about themselves, their adversaries, the latter's goals, intentions and aspirations, or about the salience of these for the other side;
- [3] The goals of the adversaries remain clearly incompatible, so that both cannot have what each wants:
- [4] The two goal sets remain stable and salient for the two parties and the two sets of leaders enjoy the full support of the overwhelming majority of their followers for the continued pursuit of those goals.

Is this an inherently irresolvable situation consisting of a wholly intractable, zero sum conflict, which can only be dealt with through;

- [1] an outcome of unilateral abandonment in which one party gives up its goals thus enabling the other to attain what it desires;
- [2] a compromise settlement [a solution of division by splitting the country and creating two separate political systems]
- [3] institutionalising the conflict in some form [say through an electoral system and agreed power sharing]
- [4] "increasing the pie", in the hope that the extra goods gained by each side will compensate for not getting all they wanted ?

3.1. The Centrality of Goal Incompatibility.

To begin to answer that question, it will be helpful to return to a basic and relatively uncontentious definition of a social "conflict" as being:

A situation in which at least two separate parties possess goals that are - or appear to be - mutually incompatible.

This situation of conflict [or adversary relationship] customarily leads to behaviour by both in pursuit of their goals which, unchecked or unchannelled, often escalates into coercion and counter coercion, and ultimately into sustained violence. The existence of goal incompatibility and the inter-action in pursuit of the parties' goals is also frequently accompanied by emotional and perceptual changes on the part of those involved in the adversary relationship, involving heightened fear, hostility, mistrust, stereotyping and miscommunication. Such conflicts escalate, enlarge and protract into Somalias, Bosnias, Sri Lankas, Rwandas.

Given that I have argued above that stopping the parties' violent behaviour and removing some of the participants' fear and mistrust are important but peripheral aspects of the process of conflict resolution, the core of the concept of "conflict resolution" as an outcome must logically involve dealing in some satisfactory way with the situation of goal incompatibility. If it is possible to remove or transform the core goal incompatibility, then the problem will have been dealt with and the conflict finally resolved.

Again let me emphasise that this argument does not involve any underestimation of the difficulties caused by the behavioural and emotional dimensions of protracted conflict. A major part of the practical difficulties of coping with deep-rooted and [often] violent conflicts lies in simply stopping the violence and the coercion employed by parties in conflict to achieve their goals [one of which frequently becomes taking just vengeance on an apparently callous and inhuman adversary]. Peacekeeping, peace enforcement, tension reducing measures, truce observation, monitoring and policing, even the imposition of sanctions, are all ways of coping with the more appalling behavioural manifestations of protracted, deep-rooted conflicts. Normally, all need to be employed in conjunction with efforts to deal with the basic goal incompatibilities underlying the behaviour.

However, although it is becoming common practice to refer to such activities as "conflict resolution" it still seems more accurate to reserve that label procedurally for efforts to address basic goal incompatibilities and structurally as the removal of such incompatibilities, as it is the mutual exclusivity of adversaries' goals that lies at the heart of any conflict and

underpins the widespread belief that many conflicts are inherently irresolvable. If a persuasive counter argument is to be made to the effect that conflicts are, indeed, resolvable, it must deal with this dilemma of goals being mutually incompatible or mutually exclusive at the time the conflict becomes overt.

3.2. Change and Conflict Resolution.

Any argument to the effect that conflicts are resolvable must begin by admitting that goals may certainly be mutually incompatible or mutually exclusive, although in many cases goals that appear to be wholly incompatible may, on closer examination, be found not to exclude each other wholly. However, the point can then be raised as to whether genuinely incompatible goals and the circumstances that give rise to them are also immutable.

From Heraclitus and the Stoics, the acknowledgement of change has been a central feature of philosophers' view of the world and there seems no reason to exempt today's world of conflicts from that principle or to disagree with Marcus Aurelius that "...all things are continually being born of change..." (9) Situations and people change, human aspirations alter, essential or desirable goods can over time become peripheral luxuries, today's necessities can be transformed into tomorrow's irrelevancies. Given human propensity to change and particularly to learn, it may be that fundamental goal incompatibilities at one point in time can become non-conflicting or even complementary goals at others. Moreover, if goals can change "naturally" through the passage of time, through learning, through changing value sets, it may be that they can be influenced in such a way that they will change, and even change rapidly, given the possibility of engineered circumstances, accelerated learning processes or coming into contact with alternative views and values.

Whatever the means, this central point remains one key to arguing that conflicts can, in principle, be resolved, even if adversaries' goals are, at one point of time, truly irreconcilable. The most intractable conflict can be always resolved by changes in one or other party, leading to its abandoning the goals that created the conflict in the first place and adopting others that are complementary.(10) The ability of adversaries to change, even if the change takes place over the same length of time it took for the French and Germans to regard themselves as neighbours and then fellow EC citizens rather than traditional enemies, is at the centre of the "resolvable conflict" doctrine.

In fact, there are two rather different arguments about how a change of parties' goals can lead to a resolution of a conflict. One argument is that individuals as well as more complex groups, communities or parties can alter, learn and change goals over time and I return to this argument a little later.

The second arises from the fact that most parties in most intractable conflicts are tremendously complicated entities. Hence, to talk about "a party's" goals in a conflict is to oversimplify greatly usually by taking the publicly enunciated goals of that party's top decision makers as its goals and ignoring the fact that such complex parties are seldom homogenous, with uniform values or objectives, that they can contain within themselves a very different range of goals held by different factions/individuals and that the balance of influence on decision making processes can change, often drastically through change in the top leadership.

3.3. Change of Leadership and Resolution.

Given, then, that goal incompatibilities between parties lie at the core of any adversary relationship, but with this "party complexity" argument in mind, it is easy to see that there is one common way in which goal incompatibilities between parties can be transformed, although many conflict researchers, while acknowledging the practical importance of such a possibility, would not regard it as an example of resolving an intractable conflict. However, most would agree that it is theoretically possible [and not historically unknown] for some conflicts to be "ended" - in some sense - by the leaders who hold one set of goals being replaced by other leaders who hold wholly different goals, which no longer clash with those of the erstwhile adversary. In such a situation, the whole official goal set of one of the "parties" can change, so that both a new set of goals and the existing set espoused by the adversary can be mutually achieved without any need for a compromise "solution of division".

One historical example of such a resolution brought about the ending of the first war between Britain and the Boer Republic in 1881. Then the replacement of a Conservative Government in London by a new Liberal Government with a completely different set of goals and priorities led to the abandonment of a policy of British expansion in southern Africa, and an ending of the British Government/Boer Government conflict over the Transvaal. [Lehmann 1972] Other historical examples of such change of goal sets can be found. (11) However, the subsequent history of British/Boer relations in southern Africa indicate that a similar change can take place in the other direction, so that this type of "resolution" by change of leaders and goal sets can be volatile and temporary.

Furthermore, this argument merely asserts that it is possible for a change of leadership to involve the introduction of a new set of compatible goals into the conflict, so that the new leadership is involved in the kind of reversal of policy described in the case of the British Government in 1881. New leadership with different goals and values can merely present an opportunity for a reversal of strategy and a resolution provided the new goal set is compatible with that of the adversary. It may equally be that the new leadership's objectives lead to the continuation or even intensification of an existing policy of violence and coercion, depending upon whether the replacement process has occurred because old policies are seen as irrelevant to changed goals or old policies have simply not been pursued with sufficient vigour. 3.4. Mutable Goals.

While a change of leadership is one way in which new goals can enter a conflict so that a party's goals are mutable, a more interesting if less understood type of change arises from the fact that it is clearly the case that individual's goals are not immutable, but can change over time, often in quite complicated ways. This dynamic aspect of goal setting is different from the one discussed above, in which different individuals within the same party holding very different goal sets. It involves the observation that the same individuals can hold quite different goals at different points of time.

This changeable feature of the goals of people and parties in conflict is often neglected in arguments about conflict situations being "inherently zero-sum" or "inherently irresolvable". Given one salient goal set held by one of the adversaries, it may be quite true that the conflict is insoluble. Given another, this may cease to be the case.

Moreover, it is not necessary for a party's complete goal set to change for a conflict situation to stop involving mutually exclusive goals. People can also change the order of importance of their goals, so that what at one point in time appears to be a key goal for which others will willingly be sacrificed can become, over time, a peripheral issue of slight importance. Circumstances can change the relative evaluation of the goals held by individuals and shared by groups, communities and nations.

For example, new technologies can radically alter specific goals to do with security;

- [1] British abandonment of policies to control the Low Countries in Europe.
- [2] The irrelevance of territorial buffer zones in a missile age.
- [3] The replacement of once strategically vital supplies [oil fuel] by alternative [power] sources.

Similarly, ideological changes can render previously vital goals of lesser or no importance;

- [1] Maintenance of friendly regimes in distant places.
- [2] Systematic and global efforts to weaken an ideological rival.
- [3] Automatic supply of arms to allies involved in their own, local disputes.

Thirdly, diminution of resources can bring about a re-evaluation of priorities;

- [1] European withdrawal from colonial empires, post-1945.
- [2] White South Africans' decision to abandon apartheid and accept a multi-racial country
- [3] The P.L.O.s decision to negotiate with Israel as a result of diminished Arab support following the Iraq/Kuwait war.

All of the above are examples of situations in which goals that were highly salient - that is, salient enough to be fought over and sacrificed for - at one time, ceased to be regarded as important because of contextual changes for particular parties, and in some cases ceased to be goals worth pursuing by any means at all

4. Dynamics of Goal Changing.

At the moment, unfortunately, conflict researchers know little that is systematic about how quickly the goals sets of parties in conflict can change [and their reasons for changing]. How dynamic are goal sets ? There is a great deal of evidence to show that the very fact of being in conflict with other parties over particular goals has the effect of making those goals even more salient and unchangeable, and that these qualities increase with the level of sacrifices made to achieve the goals. The greater the costs incurred in the pursuit of particular goals, the more highly people evaluate the achievement of those goals and the more tenaciously people cling to them. (12) Kenneth Boulding [1962] refers to this as the "sacrifice principle", while much of the recent literature on the phenomenon of entrapment notes how the value of a particular course of action in pursuit of initial goals increases with the amount of time, effort and resources invested in achieving those goals. [Teger 1981; Brockner & Rubin 1985]

Furthermore, there are a number of reasons for believing that people in general - leaders as well as followers - do not change their goals either quickly or easily. Roger Marris, for example, in discussing people's resistance to change, mentions a general "...need for continuity of understanding..." - a particularly influential factor when sudden, significant

changes present a threat to people's established identity, involve a major loss, or disrupt their "...organised structure of understanding and emotional attachments..." [Marris 1974 p.4]

It does not seem unlikely that what Marris describes as "the conservative impulse" is at work in situations of protracted and deep-rooted conflict, in which the identities of members of rival parties become profoundly interconnected with the existence [and continuation] of the adversary relationship, so that "continuity of understanding" is largely dependent upon the stability of that relationship, rather than its disruption. People may never become "comfortable" with their conflicts, but [particularly if the latter are protracted] they do orientate their lives around them - especially when they involve salient and central goals. Protracted conflicts become part of a stable environment for those involved - almost a map with which to make sense of the world and their place within it. (13) Much affected by her work on Cyprus, Louise Diamond [1998] talks about "conflict habituated societies" and, at least in a psychological sense, deep-rooted conflicts can become "routinised", part of a settled "...need to conserve the structure of purpose that makes life meaningful..." [Marris 1974. p.104]

Altering one's long held goals, changing long term strategies, reversing relationships with an erstwhile adversary, can all threaten a "disintegration of a meaningful environment" of stable conflict [Marris 1974 p.22]. Although such an environment is likely to be dangerous, it can provide a stable framework of concepts [threats, enemies, allies] and purposes [worthy and worthwhile goals, objectives and sacrifices] that help parties in conflict make sense of their world and build a "construction of reality" that resists change and discontinuity and makes alteration of goals, objectives and strategies a long drawn out and difficult process.

On the other hand, there is considerable evidence that people can change goal sets or orderings very rapidly indeed, given circumstances which free them from the entrapping factors that lock parties [and their leaders] in a given strategy for pursuing particular goals. Marris argues that the "idea of prospective loss" is a factor that makes people willing to contemplate change and to innovate, and suggests that change which involves a continuation or extension of basic organising principles is likely to ease the attendant disruption.

More usually, however, change in goal sets takes a long time, as when a "war weariness" factor elevates the goals of peace, safety and - more problematically - a return to pre-war material standards above those of protecting Belgium, or defeating the militarism of Imperial Germany, or making the world safe for democracy. It took the United States Government over ten years, for example, to replace the goal of "containing communism" in Vietnam with that of achieving a face saving withdrawal of US forces from that country, but eventually enough Americans had altered their goal ordering to enable a settlement to be arranged.

The circumstances in which goals change appear to be very varied and the process by which new goals replace old as legitimate policy objectives is usually a long and difficult one, particularly for complex parties in a protracted conflict. [See Mitchell & Nicholson 1981] (14) Re-costing of goals does seem to be a major determinant of whether they will continue to be valued highly enough to warrant their continued pursuit in the face of determined opposition for an adversary. It often seems that a key aspect of this costing - and frequent downgrading - process involves parties considering future opportunity costs of particular goals in conflict with adversaries. If decision makers and their supporters become increasingly aware of the opportunity costs [in terms of other, valued goals sacrificed] they continue to incur in pursuing their goals in conflict; or if they can become aware of the likely future costs of continuing to pursue those goals in terms of further alternatives foregone, then they may undergo a process of re-evaluating their conflicting goals. (15)

From a practical conflict resolution point of view, however, it is usually the case that a "costing out" of pursuing the conflict in terms of goals sacrificed by so doing is not enough, in and of itself, to persuade parties to search for a resolution by non-coercive means - quite apart from its being difficult for leaders to find the time, opportunity or inclination to carry out such a "costing" exercise. The other element that must be present involves the possibility that some part of the original goals, or some acceptable alternative might be found in a less costly fashion by other [non-coercive] methods. How can this be, if it was the very incompatibility of those goals that underlay the original emergence of the conflict ?

5. Goals as Means and as Alternatives..

The main answer to this conundrum can be found in the suggestion that, frequently, the goals which lie at the centre of protracted conflicts, although obviously salient and important to the parties pursuing them, frequently are the practical and temporally specific manifestations of other interests and values shared by members of the embattled party - or by a majority [or a dominant minority] thereof. In most protracted conflicts, the expressed goals come to appear synonymous and co-terminous with the values and interests that they represent, although they usually remain the selected means for achieving those deeper values and interests. [Often it appears to those involved in a protracted conflict that there is not much "selection" involved, as they seem to have no alternative courses of action available - and this is often true in a practical sense at a given point of time.] (16)

5.1. Alternative Means and Underlying Interests.

If goals being pursued in a protracted conflict are means of fulfilling deeper values or achieving wider interests, it follows that at least in theory other means could be available, even if they might prove to be;

[1] less desirable, in that they involve more sacrifices or take more time or don't achieve the interest quite as fully; or
[2] currently unavailable, owing to the apparent intransigence, untrustworthiness or other shortcoming of the adversary or the environment.

Not surprisingly, this is not a possibility that occurs readily to adversaries in any deep-rooted conflict. Leaders of parties engaged in protracted struggle frequently justify costly strategies aimed at salient goals by announcing that "There is no alternative", or "Give me Liberty or give me Death", as if these were the only two logical or practical possibilities. The former assertion was a favourite slogan of Mrs. Thatcher, the British Prime Minister of the 1980s, and if it was blatantly untrue in her case, there is always reason to suspect it in others.

If there is any validity in the argument that the incompatible goals underlying conflicts are frequently means of achieving wider interests, then it follows that someone can always ask the question of whether some other goals might not achieve the interests at least equally well [and maybe better]; and whether these latter goals remain mutually incompatible with either the goals currently espoused by an adversary, or with alternative goals that might equally fulfil the underlying interests and values of that adversary.

At a purely analytical level, movement towards resolving an apparently intractable conflict involving goals which appear unquestionably mutually exclusive often begins with some simple questions:

[1] What do you hope to achieve in the long run by attaining the goals currently in conflict ?

[2] Why do you regard these goals as so important ?

[3] What fundamental interests will you fulfil by attaining the goals for which you are currently struggling ?

[4] What is preventing your using other methods of achieving these goals or fulfilling these underlying interests ?

[5] What are you trying to avoid happening by achieving this goal set ?

[6] What alternatives are you having to sacrifice in order to achieve your present set of goals ?

Underlying all of these questions is one central puzzle, solving which may unlock a door to another, alternative set of mutually compatible options, if not in the parties' present circumstances at least in some other situation involving - perhaps - a minimal change in their relationship or means of communicating: "Why this particular good, at this particular time, by this particular set of strategies ?"

5.2. Alternatives to a Solution of Division.

I can illustrate this by returning to our previous conflict over the parenthood - and hence possession - of a disputed baby, ostensibly settled by Solomon's decision to divide the good equally between the two adversaries. At one level, Solomon decided to "resolve" this conflict by a simple, positional bargaining, split the difference, third party choice process. In other words, he took the two rivals' public bargaining positions as their immutable goals, and divided the "good" in question into equal portions and awarded as equal amount to each party. Of course, underlying this process was a complex theoretical framework that Solomon had about the psychology of mothers and non-mothers claiming babies [I am less than sure that even a non-mother would have settled so easily for half the good in question as Solomon seems to have assumed. Possibly his was a wholly inaccurate, patriarchal theory.] But let us stay, for the moment, at the level of analysis provided by the biblical story.

What Solomon could have done as an alternative process might have involved asking why a non-mother could have wanted a baby, given the time, place and circumstances. Might the underlying interest have been in replacing her own lost child, or in obtaining the children she would be unable to have naturally in future ? Or of avoiding a future social stigma of being barren ? Or of obtaining some respectability and status through fulfilling what Solomon's society would probably have deemed an essential female role ? If the non-mother's interest underlying the goal of obtaining a baby - leaving aside for the moment her wanting this particular baby - then other options become possible, involving the availability of orphaned children or alternative ways of conferring status and respect on individuals in a social system (17).

Alternatively, there is the question of why a non-mother could have wanted this particular baby; what did it specifically represent ? In the absence of such a question being asked, it is possible to speculate that the non-mother might simply be seeking revenge or restitution for a previous wrong by the mother or by a close relative (18). Her underlying interest might have been the recovery of a debt or the settling of some old scores. The whole conflict might be symbolic of a long

standing feud between families or clans, involving numerous interlocking issues and disputes. If the two women came from different classes or different ethnic groups, then a whole series of other interests may have underlain the obviously incompatible goal of both wishing to possess the baby, and allowed alternative solutions to that of division of the good in question.

If any of these factors were part of the context for the conflict, then Solomon's strategy of discovering the natural mother and "settling" the conflict by awarding the whole baby to that woman might have resulted simply an exacerbation of underlying conflicts of which the dispute over the baby was merely symptomatic. His task as a genuine conflict resolver was not simply to detect a deceiver so was thus only beginning when he accepted the surface description of the conflict, its nature and its underlying causes.

Being critical of Solomon is easy - and unfair - but the story does illustrate the difference between simply accepting parties' enunciation of their own goals at face value, and trying to settle a conflict in which those goals - as defined - really are mutually incompatible; and attempting to investigate the interests and values underlying those goals and exploring whether alternative, compatible goals might fulfil those interests equally well - or perhaps even better. Are there alternatives ? Can one discover or devise means by which the parties can obtain what they themselves want ? How might one be able to do this in a situation where both parties are mutually coercing each other and are often unwilling to trust each other even to the point where they will meet face to face ? And, even if it is theoretically possible to answer such questions affirmatively and thus envisage the resolution of an intractable conflict, there remains a wide gap between a logical or theoretical possibility and a practical opportunity, although I would argue that the simple realisation that there may be alternative ways of getting what you want and that alternatives can [and probably do] exist, should give leaders of parties in conflict at least some incentive for asking the question; How might such a possibility be explored ? (19)

6. Solutions of Creation.

Recognition of another, rather different approach to the question of what sort of solution might justifiably be sought to an intractable conflict returns the argument briefly to the discussion of the range of types of solution theoretically available by casting further doubt on the universal validity of the constant sum paradigm discussed earlier in this paper. To our list of solutions of division, of substitution and of expansion a fourth and basically different type could be added, which might be entitled solutions of creation. These should not be confused with some of the other forms of "integrative agreement" already discussed, which are often mentioned in the literature as being solutions that "create value" in the sense that, by adding goods to the overall settlement, they "expand the pie" [to use Pruitt's expression] of goods to be shared out among the adversaries, thus easing what remains, fundamentally, a task of division.

In fact, it might be better to label this particular form of solution differently as one of "re-invention" or "re-conceptualisation", or to use Pruitt's term of "bridging". However, the core role played by genuinely creative thinking in this type of solution is so central that the term solutions of creation does seem more appropriate. Whatever the label, this type of solution depends initially on a rejection of a zero-sum approach even to intractable conflicts. Rather, it involves a re-interpretation of parties' goals and means as a first step towards fully achieving underlying interests, thus "bridging" the gap between the goals enunciated in the public bargaining positions of adversaries and the more crucial interests underlying those goals. The principle, in Pruitt's terms involves "...the reformulation of the issue(s) based on an analysis of the underlying interests of both sides..." [1986 p.469]. As I have argued above, it may be that the underlying interests of the adversaries may be found actually to be compatible, or other, non-exclusive means may be found of satisfying such interests. Alternatively - although whether this would also count as an "integrative solution" is open to question - Pruitt suggests that if some means might be found to elucidate the parties' priorities among their interests, then this might enable a solution to be discovered or created that satisfied the higher priorities of each, even if some of the less salient interests remain unsatisfied.

Whatever the nuances of this approach, its existence does enable a modification of our original Table to include a fourth type of possible solution:

TYPE OF SOLUTION	MAIN CHARACTERISTICS	TYPICAL EXAMPLE
Solutions of Division	Compromise and Sharing	Division of land: India 1947 West Bank partition
Solutions of Substitution	Compensation - Log-rolling - Non specific compensation - Cost cutting	"Land for Peace"
Solutions of Expansion	Increase via collaborative effort.	Industrial productivity agreement
Solutions of Creation	Reconceptualisation of nature of the issues in the conflict.	Fight into debate or game

TABLE 2. FULL RANGE OF TYPES OF SOLUTION IN INTRACTABLE CONFLICTS

Talk of "elucidation" of the bridge between goals and interests and of parties' hierarchies of interest returns the discussion once again to dilemmas of practice and to "conflict resolution" as procedure. The practical challenge for a procedure that might justifiably be termed one of "conflict resolution" thus becomes to set one in place whereby parties can examine the interests, values and needs underlying their currently incompatible goals, and jointly come up with alternative, compatible goals, which are, in fact, alternative means of achieving underlying interests, values and needs - if possible in a less costly fashion in terms of sacrificed alternatives.

7. Implications for Conflict Resolution as Process.

In this Chapter I have argued that many of the criticisms of conflict researchers' argument that almost all conflicts are inherently resolvable are based upon a misinterpretation of what that statement means. Fundamentally, that argument is that the goal incompatibilities that lie at the heart of all conflicts must be reconciled for a complete, successful, and long lasting resolution, and that it is theoretically possible to do this because, on the one hand, goals are not immutable but change and can be changed by circumstances and contexts; and on the other because enunciated goals are frequently means of achieving underlying interests or fulfilling fundamental values which may be achieved or fulfilled by other means.

In some situations there may, indeed, be no other way of fulfilling the underlying interests and aspirations of the parties to a conflict at that particular time. However, there may be - if thought and effort are devoted to analysing what such interests and aspirations actually are, and what the resultant goals truly represent. And there may be at a later time, if interests, goals or circumstances change. At base, this is what conflict researchers mean when they talk about conflicts being "resolvable problems" and I discuss the application of these possibilities to two types of particularly intractable conflicts in Chapter 2.

It may be that even the existence of the theoretical possibility of a resolution to an intractable and long drawn out conflict will bring some hope of a practical solution to the parties in conflict. However, the fact that mutually acceptable solution might exist in some realm of theory is only a first step -and not much of a first step - in the direction of finding such practical solutions to protracted conflicts.

What implications does all of the above have for the practical business of conflict resolution in the field, where the immediate problems are to stop people killing each other in large numbers, or to get negotiators round a table without hedging the bargaining process round with a crushing burden of mutually unacceptable conditions for talks ?

I will try to deal with the practical aspects of conflict resolution as a process in a later Chapter, but an outline of the principles on which such a process needs to be based should be discernible in this present work, even though it has approached the subject from the viewpoint of analysis and conflict resolution as outcome rather than practice and conflict resolution as procedure.

Implicitly, I have argued that to begin to move towards a resolution, parties in an intractable conflict [or at least some key members thereof];

[1] Have to be made aware of the theoretical possibility of a positive sum solution for their conflict - if they can go beyond their immediate bargaining positions and publicly repeated goals which are usually portrayed as non-negotiable;

[2] Have to become aware that the problem is not solely of their adversary's making and that while the adversary is certainly part of their problem, equally they are part of the adversary's problem - so they both have to be involved in the making of a solution.

[3] Have to be convinced that there is a potential negotiating partner on the other side - not just an implacably malevolent enemy whose only wish is for their harm and whose every move is calculated to cause maximum damage.

[4] Have to be placed in circumstances where it is possible to explore each others' underlying interests - the values and aims that underlie the goals being pursued and the positions publicly enunciated.

[5] Have to be put in a position where they can explore the costs of continuing to pursue their goals and interests by the strategies that have - so far - led to the protraction of the conflict, higher costs than anticipated, and the risks of further sacrifices to come.

[6] Have to be able to explore, jointly and without commitment, alternative means of achieving their underlying interests to see whether some of these might lead to means-goals that are mutually compatible.

[7] Have to be put in a position in which together, they can explore likely obstacles to pursuing new alternatives and options, and how these might be successfully dealt with, if a new relationship is to be established and solutions implemented.

Merely listing the requirements in principle of a successful process of conflict resolution is somewhat frightening, and all of these steps and stages need careful explanation and exploration. How can such unlikely circumstances arise? Who can play what role in bringing about such preliminary recognition of possibilities and how? Where is the role of the intermediary, the peacekeeping force, the regional intergovernmental organisation? Who assists adversaries with the costing of alternatives and what convincing metric can be devised for such costing?

The list of such questions appears endless, and with each question doubts about the practicality of achieving any resolution - however theoretically possible - grow stronger. However, the continuation of the Somalias, the Kosovos, the Belfasts and the Bieruts is still more daunting and frightening, and their contemplation should encourage everyone to persevere with the conception of conflict as a resolvable problem, even if the road to resolution is a complex and difficult one. I will suggest a sketch map of that road and some techniques for accessing and travelling it in subsequent Chapters.

ENDNOTES

(1) I say "in theory" because it seems to me that it may be the case that one could envisage a whole range of solutions for a particular conflict and yet none of them be of much practical value given the current state of the parties to the conflict. Leaders may, for example, have driven themselves into a political corner from which any non-coercive move towards the adversary may result in loss of power and replacement by even more dedicated "hawks".

(2) There are a whole series of other interesting and important questions attached to this central concern. Are there some conflicts which, by their nature, are irresolvable ? Are there certain types of conflict which can only be settled through compromise and never fully resolved [for example, conflicts over territory] ? Do conflicts arise from certain inherent and unchangeable features of human nature that render them resistant to resolution ? Are men - and women - inherently conflict prone ?

All of these are interesting and important, but they seem to me to be secondary to the core question posed above. If we cannot show that conflicts are resolvable in principle, at least, then it would be better for us to acknowledge the fact and start seeking better ways of managing and ameliorating something that cannot be resolved. And we had better stop using the term itself.

(3) In addition, one should note the indirect influence of economics ("The study of the allocation of scarce resources among competing ends") and the direct - and, some would say, baleful - influence of Game Theory on conflict research.

(4) Of course, it is always possible to argue as does Gerald Wetlaufer [1996], that even in this situation, such a solution may be an "improvement" for both adversaries, and thus represent an "overall" gain in value. If things are so bad for one side that getting an agreement - any agreement - will result in its not suffering the "costs of combat" any longer, then any agreement - even one that produces a clear loser and winner - will "create value" even for the loser and certainly create value for the winner. The result will be an "integrative solution" that increases the overall value gained from the outcome, at least compared with the value of continuing the conflict. I am not sure, however, that this is what proponents of "integrative solutions" have in mind, even though Wetlaufer argues that some reputational benefits could accrue to the loser through gains in its reputation for being reasonable.

(5) The dominance of this zero-sum "worldview" is ensured by the fact that it underpins leaders' policies towards conflicts, in either prosecuting them or trying to settle them. Hence the approach derives further legitimacy and confirmation through its constant use, much in the manner of other self-fulfilling prophecies. Its "realism" appears to be confirmed by use and experience, and its dominance ensures the marginalisation of other views about conflicts and their resolution.

(6) This is not to deny that such solutions improve upon a simple solution of division where no effort is made to improve anyone's sense of gain so that "...whatever the nature of the compromise outcome, it is likely to be far less than optimal, leaving the nations equally dissatisfied..." [Samuelson 1985 p.109] Perhaps equalising dissatisfaction is one way of achieving equity.

(7) In a way, both direct and nonspecific forms of compensation could also be regarded as other ways of "expanding the pie", with the additional goods being supplied by the party gaining most of the goods in dispute or by outside parties who wish to support a settlement. However, both seem clearly different from "solutions of expansion" which I discuss later in this paper.

(8) Similarly, when talking about the possibility of conflict resolution, conflict researchers are not saying that any conflict can be resolved [or magically transformed] at any stage of its development. Even the most optimistic conflict analyst will admit that there are stages in any conflict when little can be done to move towards a resolution, and that such stages can, in some conflicts, last a very long time during which all that can be done is to monitor the situation, attempt to ameliorate some of the worst effects of the coercion and violence being used against each other by the adversaries, and prepare for other, more promising circumstances to arise. We are only now, in the research on "timing" and "ripeness", beginning systematically to consider what such circumstances might be and how their appearance might best be accelerated. However, as a matter of practice rather than principle, analysts talking about the possibility of resolving a particular conflict do not mean to imply that a resolution is a realistic option in any and every time. As a practical process, conflict resolution can take quite as long as conflict emergence and escalation.

(9) Marcus Aurelius goes on to urge "...teach yourself to see that Nature's highest happiness lies in changing the things that are, and forming new things after their kind..." Meditations Book 4.36

(10) It is, of course, the objective of each party's coercive strategy to make the other party abandon its goals and much effort is bent to the end of "unilateral goal adjustment".

(11) One could also recall the manner in which Prussia [and Frederick the Great], were saved from defeat by the

accession of the Germanophile, Catherine the Great of Russia in the 17th Century.

(12) It frequently seems to be the case that parties in conflict often add other goals [such as denying the adversary their goals, or "punishing" that adversary] to their original goals set, thus making the conflict yet more intractable.

(13) The profound sense of disorientation among some western intellectuals following the closing of the Cold War and the ending of the "adversary partnership" may be an example of this "loss of continuity" once a conflict is over. The concomitant search - at least in the West - for a new adversary may represent a coping mechanism for this loss and disorientation - what Marris describes as "an impulse to restore the past". [Marris 1974 p.5] Note the sense of relief that pervades much recent American writing about the resurgence of Russian foreign policy ambitions in the "near abroad".

(14) However, it is clearly the case that individuals, decision making elites and parties in conflict do learn and change goals over time, although this is not necessarily a classical "rational" process in which the benefits from obtaining the goal[s] in question are periodically weighed against the likely costs of achieving them. At the very least, there are frequent cases where the chief determinant of continuing to value particular goals highly [and to pursue them by coercing an adversary] appears to be the level of resources already expended in their pursuit. Sunk costs as opposed to future costs play a major role in maintaining -sometimes even increasing - the value of the goal being sought. (Mitchell 1991)

(15) The practical, conflict resolution problem is how to involve parties in processes that enable them to "cost out", with some accuracy, the likely sacrifices they are going to have to make in order to achieve the incompatible goals underlying the conflict.

(16) The slogan of the Irish Unionists in the early years of this century is revealing both as a very specific political goal - one which set them in conflict with Irish Nationalists - and as an indication of the more general interests reaching that goal would maintain; "A Protestant state for a Protestant people..."

A similar statement was made in a recent [1994] problem solving workshop attended by the author which involved issues of attempted secession in the former Soviet Union, when one participant stated that his party had set up a new state "...in order to safeguard our interests and our security..."

(17) Steven Brams [1990 pp.17-25] has argued that the overriding interest of the non-mother was to curry favour with Solomon by acceding to his decision even if this meant dismembering the baby. However this analysis begs the question of what interests underlay the imposter's claim in the first place, which surely can have had little to do with winning the king's favour. Moreover, it does reinforce the argument that at least one party [the imposter] came to have underlying interests that could have been satisfied by other means, once the dispute had reached the level of royal arbitration.

(18) As Kim and Smith point out, conflicts often generate new goals in that parties involve themselves in "...an attempt to inflict harm in return for harm.." [p.38] However, they also argue that underlying such a goal is often the interest of either [1] restoring a sense of self-worth that has been damaged by the original injury; [2] obtaining justice for harm done and [3] deterring future injury. All of these interests could be achieved by means other than inflicting counter-injury as revenge.

(19) This question is likely to become more insistent as the costs of continuing coercive strategies increase and the prospects of achieving one's original goals do not appear to improve greatly.

CHAPTER 2

CONFLICT RESOLUTION AS A COMPLEX PROCESS.

In Chapter 1 I explored the concept of "conflict resolution", asking what was meant by the argument that conflicts were all [potentially] "resolvable". In that Chapter I concentrated upon one of the major conceptions of conflict resolution - namely, that of conflict resolution as a condition or an end state, a situation in which parties have had their goal incompatibilities removed so that a new situation of goal complementarity exists, together with a new inter-party relationship.

In this Chapter I wish to build upon my previous argument to examine the other major common meaning of conflict resolution, that of a process or set of activities that enables parties to achieve the condition in which one particular set of their goal incompatibilities has, indeed, been removed - although this does nothing to guarantee that they cannot find themselves in the future facing major goal incompatibilities involving other issues or inter-related clusters of issues.

As I emphasised previously, the fact that the resolution of a particular protracted conflict is possible in theory is not meant to imply that such an end state is easy to achieve in practice. Plainly, there are immense practical difficulties in moving away from a situation in which parties possess mutually inconsistent goals and opposed and intransigent bargaining positions; have been using coercive [and frequently violent] strategies to achieve their objectives; have suffered major damage through the cost imposing activities of their adversary; and have developed an understandable hatred, fear and intense suspicion of one another. An alternative, in which the coercive behaviour has ceased, the hatreds and fear at least become muted, and the goal incompatibilities removed through the devising of an acceptable and self supporting solution that reconciles underlying interests and values usually seems an unattainable ideal.

1. A Traditional, Three Level Approach to Conflict and Peace.

My previous discussion ended with the suggestion that achieving a resolution of any conflict [which, by definition, meant finding a successful solution to the basic goal incompatibility] involved, as necessary but not sufficient conditions, putting the rival parties into circumstances where, having become convinced that there are alternative ways of achieving key interests and that there is a genuine interest on the other side in exploring these, they could jointly explore possibilities for new options leading to a win-win solution for what they now recognise as a mutual problem. This suggestion blithely skated over the question of how this might be achieved in practice - or what might need to follow such an exploration - but a moment's reflection will reveal that, at the least, success would involve;

[1] Persuading the adversaries to stop coercion and violence, even if only in a temporary truce, and de-escalating the level of the conflict;

[2] Getting the leaders of the parties in conflict to agree to attend or send representatives to discussions with an adversary whom they have customarily anathematised as irrational and implacably harmful;

[3] Providing a safe venue where such discussions might take place, and a process that maximises the chances of genuine discussion, analysis and exploration.

[4] Conducting discussions in such a manner that a productive exploration of a highly contentious past can occur, the fundamental sources of the conflict be revealed, and fresh options for fulfilling underlying interests and values developed.

[5] Initiating a process for subsequently investigating practical options and enabling actions that lead towards major changes in aspirations, beliefs, behaviour and inter-actions between parties.

It is hardly coincidental that this list of conditions echoes a trend in recent writings in the literature from International Relations scholars on the subject of making peace. Beginning with Galtung [1985], there has been much talk in Peace Research circles about the need for three inter-related procedures to be involved at three distinct levels; peacekeeping, peacemaking and peacebuilding.

Traditionally, the peacekeeping component of international conflict resolution has primarily involved efforts to alter the behaviour of adversaries, usually at the point where they realise that coercion and violence are unlikely to bring success in the short term, and that the costs of continuing present strategies are likely to be very high. Thus, peacekeeping involves efforts to "...halt and reduce the manifest violence of the conflict through the intervention of military forces in an interpositionary role..." [Harbottle; 1979]

In fact, traditional peacekeeping has also often had another latent purpose in that, through providing parties with "a breathing space", it also provides an opportunity for emotions to lessen, attitudes to become less inflexible, and images and stereotypes to alter. The assumption is that such breathing space, combined with the prior realisation of the likely costs of continuing mutual coercion, will lead the parties towards efforts at peacemaking, although this usually takes the form of traditional negotiation and hard bargaining. (1)

Peacemaking, traditionally conceived, has involved efforts to reconcile differences or to find a solution to the "conflicts of interest" of the adversaries. Hence, the customary tools of negotiation, mediation, conciliation and [less frequently] arbitration or facilitation have been used to develop acceptable settlements, usually by getting elites and decision makers to accept compromise settlements on the grounds that these will prove preferable and less costly than a continuing violence and coercion.

As such, traditional peacemaking processes concentrate primarily on ostensible goals and public bargaining positions, rather than on changing aspirations, fears and behaviour, although it is often anticipated that there will be a latent effect on attitudes, at least at the elite level, through the process of bargaining and negotiation.

More recently, much attention has been paid in the Conflict Research literature to the necessity of accompanying - in certain cases of preceding - peacemaking activities with other processes aimed at "peacebuilding". It is frequently argued that, unless such efforts are made, all that will result from formal peacemaking will be what Shimon Shamir describes as the kind of "Cold Peace" that followed the Camp David Accords between Israel and Egypt (2). In other words, overt violence and coercion may have ceased, some goals may have been reconciled, some of the parties' underlying interests may have been achieved, and relations between the parties may be governed by a clear agreement. On the other hand, suspicions and distrust remain high, the relationship between the parties remains fundamentally negative, no overall reconciliation has occurred and attitudes and beliefs - frequently passed on to the next generation - have not altered greatly.

Peacebuilding procedures thus involve efforts to change perceptions and relationships between the parties on a very broad basis. Stephen Ryan (1990 p.61) argues that peacebuilding concentrates on "...the attitudes and socio-economic circumstances of ordinary people..." and that it tends to "...concentrate on the context of the conflict rather than on the issues that divide the parties..." [emphasis added]. The three key elements in this approach thus seem to be changing attitudes through reconciliation, material reconstruction and development, and rebuilding relationships between erstwhile adversaries on a more positive basis (3).

2. The Necessary Conditions for Achieving a Resolution of the Conflict.

Leaving aside, at least for the moment, any parallels between conflict resolution and traditional peacemaking, my argument so far has been that a process of successful conflict resolution needs to involve elements that lead to the parties admitting [to themselves at least] that their current course of action is becoming counter-productive; recognising not merely the need for, but the possibility [if only in theory] of a mutually advantageous solution; acknowledging the availability of a potential partner in a search for some solution to a mutually faced problem; halting temporarily or at least moderating their existing - usually coercive - course of action; allowing themselves to become involved in some process that involves joint exploration of their and their adversary's aspirations, concerns, values, interests and basic needs; exploring a range of acceptable solutions to their shared problem; and jointly examining ways of overcoming obstacles to the achievement of a mutually acceptable and durable solution and to its implementation.

Merely listing the initial requirements for a successful conflict resolution process gives some idea of how difficult the practicalities of setting up such a procedure are likely to be, whether or not the process involves significant third party assistance in any of these steps. Moreover, the apparent improbability of such a process taking place is emphasised when one considers the characteristics of normal conflict management procedures in which:

[1] Parties continue to coerce and damage one another even while negotiations take place, usually with the rationale that this accompanying violence will add urgency to the search for a settlement, particularly on the part of the damaged.

[2] Most pre-negotiation activities are aimed at providing one's negotiators, before they even commence discussions, with strategic and tactical advantages which can then be used to extract concessions from a seriously disadvantaged adversary

[3] The actual process of negotiation consists of "hard", positional bargaining, starting from publicly stated "minimalist" positions and aimed at giving away as little as possible in return for as much as possible.

[4] Parties see a "successful" outcome as one which achieves as many of one's own goals as possible, while frustrating those of the adversary.

[5] The underlying assumption shared by the negotiating parties is that they confront a zero-sum situation in which one party's gain axiomatically becomes the other's loss.

The contrast is stark between this traditional approach to compromising a conflict, seeking an acceptable solution of division or of substitution on the one hand, and on the other an approach that emphasises a joint exploration of underlying interests and a search for a mutually satisfactory solution. The practical difficulties of substituting a conflict resolution approach for a coercive bargaining inter-action are clearly considerable. Furthermore, while I would still argue that, as the essence of conflict resolution as outcome involves the removal of the goal incompatibilities that are the main source of the conflict, and that this can best be achieved through a joint analysis of parties' underlying interests and values in some form of analytical problem solving discussions, any view of conflict resolution as process must take into account a far wider range of activities and inter-actions than merely those discussions, however complex or difficult to arrange they might be.

For example, in protracted conflicts involving large ethnic communities, far more than elites and leaderships are involved. The views, beliefs and expectations of the embattled communities have to be taken into account, as they can constitute formidable barriers to any efforts to resolve the conflict. Similarly, the interests and activities of the military arms of governments and ethnic communities have to be dealt with in any comprehensive resolution process. Convincing elites through problem solving discussions of the possibility of a win-win solution is only one aspect of an overall resolution process.

The impact of these and other complicating factors is inevitably to make any effective conflict resolution process a highly complex one, especially if it is going to produce a long lasting solution, acceptable to all the parties involved. Central to the overall process of resolution will be some analytically searching discussions, but these are likely to comprise only one aspect of that process, which might usefully be broken down into a number of sub-processes or components.

[1] A Reconsideration component by which the leadership of one or both parties [or some key members thereof] admit to themselves that current unilateral strategies of coercion and violence are not succeeding and need to be replaced.

[2] A Reassurance component by which the party leaderships conclude that the adversaries are willing to consider searching for alternative means and outcomes; and for solutions other than outright victory.

[3] A Re-evaluation component through which leaders become aware of the possible existence of alternatives, options and other outcomes that might fulfil their party's underlying concerns and interests.

[4] A Relaxation component by which the adversaries might mitigate or suspend their efforts to win through damage and coercion, such that neither side would suffer irreparable damage to itself or its prospects by such suspension.

[5] A Risk Acceptance component which would result in the leaders of the adversaries being willing to permit or even sponsor some members to discuss openly with some members of the adversary underlying interests, aspirations, fears and concerns and which would result in the participation of representatives appropriate to such discussions.

[6] A Reconceptualisation component that would take place in a non-threatening arena, such that would permit the exploration of underlying interests, a joint search for mutually satisfactory solutions, and a joint analysis of existing obstacles to the adoption of such solutions and of ways of dealing with them.

[7] A Re-entry component that would enable the transferring of insights, ideas and options to parties' leaders and encourage their adoption as official policy and their implementation as official strategy.

[8] A Reinsurance component for minimising the likelihood that inter-party discussions and negotiations would revert to antagonistic hard bargaining.

[9] A Revisioning component for bringing about longer term, wide-spread change of attitudes, beliefs and images within adversaries

[10] A Restructuring component for ensuring that third parties play useful and appropriate roles in the resolution process such that outside interests and goals do not obtrude and complicate still further the search for durable solutions (4).

Simply expressed, the above argument amounts to saying that effective conflict resolution processes need to involve much more than success in "getting people to the table", or conducting an analytical workshop, or developing a number of mutually acceptable options which lead towards positive sum outcomes. However, until relatively recently, the literature on the process of conflict resolution has tended to be fragmentary (5) in the sense that different theorists [some of whom are also practitioners] have concentrated upon one or other aspect of the overall process, both to examine that aspect and - usually - to argue that success in this component of a conflict resolution process is key and will lead simply and directly to the achievement of a resolution of the conflict, however intractable. For example, much has been written about the most successful resolutionary formula for face to face meetings, discussions or workshops, starting with the writings of Burton

[1969, 1987] and continuing with such theorist practitioners as Kelman [1972] and Fisher [1972 and 1983] In terms of the components outlined above, this work concentrates on the reconceptualisation component and involves processes intended to facilitate the exploration of underlying interests and the search for mutually acceptable options and outcomes. Much of it has tended to concentrate on the inter-actions that occur once parties are facing each other across the table, and to deal with such topics as the role of the facilitators, the internal dynamics of the workshop, and the likely outcome from various types of discussion meeting - all admittedly essential elements of an overall conflict resolution process, but not the complete process. More recently, closer attention has been paid to how such facilitated, face to face discussions might fit into the wider conflict resolution process, and issues of appropriate links of such initiatives to formal negotiations and how they might affect official policy most productively have been discussed. [See Kelman 1993; Mitchell 1994; Diamond & McDonald 1992]

In the remainder of the Chapter I discuss a variety of recent - and some less recent - ideas about effective conflict resolution processes and their key components within the framework of the 10 suggested above. Some are examined in greater depth than others and, to some extent, this reflects the current balance of analytical attention paid, and knowledge available in the field regarding how such procedures and schemes operate to achieve an outcome of resolution.

I should add, however, that many of the procedures discussed below are intended by their practitioners to contribute to a variety of aspects of an overall resolution process. For example, many problem solving discussions are intended to contribute to the mutual assurance of erstwhile adversaries [Reassurance] at the same time as they enable an examination of underlying concerns and aspirations and also assist the parties involved to engage in more realistic calculations of the costs of continuing coercion [Re-evaluation]. Hence, it is somewhat misleading to consider many procedures as contributing solely to one component of a conflict resolution process rather than others. Wherever possible I have noted that particular procedures can perform multiple functions within the overall process and that others make a contribution to a number of components or sub-processes within the overall move to a durable outcome that resolves the conflict.

3. Components of a Conflict Resolution Process; Timing, Context and Contingency.

The last decade has seen a major effort to confront questions of appropriate timing for conflict resolution initiatives and of the circumstances that maximise the likelihood of an effective resolution process leading to a durable solution for the conflict. Part of this activity is clearly an effort to provide some clear answers to the question of what factors normally cause the leaders of parties in an intractable conflict to arrive at the conclusion that their present strategy is not working successfully, so that something else - possibly a search for some negotiated compromise and certainly a non-violent, even collaborative process - needs to be considered. Another part has led to broader consideration of finding a match between particular configurations of circumstances in protracted conflicts - often summarised as the "stage" a conflict has reached - and the most appropriate form of conflict management or conflict resolution activity for those circumstances. Three major themes have emerged in this search for generalisations about the circumstances in which leaders are likely to contemplate the start of some conflict resolution process - structural contexts, issues of timing and initiatives contingent on circumstances and staging.

3.1. Contexts for Considering Resolutionary Alternatives.

Empirical observation of protracted and intense conflicts clearly suggests that some circumstances are more conducive to leaders reconsidering policies and strategies of coercion than others, and that - if a key component of conflict resolution processes is one which involves decision makers in at least one of the adversaries starting to contemplate alternative ways of finding a solution to their conflict - then the factors that lead to such a reconsideration need to be clearly delineated. I have put forward an argument elsewhere [Mitchell 1992 and 1999] to the effect that decision makers in parties in conflict normally use an incremental continuation process of decision making when prosecuting the conflict, and will only switch to some form of comprehensive reconsideration mode when forced into this painful and costly process by major changes in their environment. In other words, it is change which brings about reconsideration and a recognition of the failure of current strategies to move the party any nearer success in achieving the goals in conflict.

At the present time, unfortunately, it is only possible to suggest a number of hunches about what kinds of change are likely to lead to decision makers to admit to themselves even the failure of existing strategies and the need to try some more collaborative process to achieve an acceptable outcome. Examples of changes leading to alteration of policy and the start of resolution processes - whether successful or not - are numerous. President Sadat's peace moves following the

ejection of the Soviet Union from Egypt provides one case. The impact of the New Labour Government's commitment to genuine devolution for the British Isles on the Northern Ireland conflict is another. Systematic findings, on the other hand, are another matter.

A tentative taxonomy of change I have used elsewhere suggests that three types are likely to be involved in bringing about some reconsideration of strategies by parties in conflict: structural changes in the conflict system itself; strategic changes in the patterns of interaction among the systems units; and short term tactical changes in the events, acts and behaviours of the adversaries. [Mitchell 2000] Of these, the most influential, if overly neglected, appear to be the major structural changes in the system itself - for example the influence of the collapse of the Soviet Union on intractable conflicts as different as those in South Africa, in Central America and in the Middle East.

At a more analytical level, I would tentatively suggest that there are a number of common types of structural changes that often provide a context for reconsideration, and increase the probability of leaders recognising - even if they find it difficult to admit - the bankruptcy of current coercion and confrontation, even when there appears to be no immediately obvious alternative:

- [1] Diminution of the number of core actors in the conflict system, which often narrows the range of issues in contention and parties to be satisfied with an outcome.
- [2] Increased involvement of adversaries in other issues, often other conflicts, which means that time, attention and resources need to be devoted to other - apparently more important - matters.
- [3] Increasing interdependence of adversaries, implying that solutions which involve total separation are recognised as no longer feasible.
- [4] Diminishing importance and number of original goals in conflict.
- [5] Greater agreement between adversaries on "what the conflict is really about."
- [6] Decreasing levels of violence and coercion.
- [7] Decreasing volatility in inter-action patterns.
- [8] Changing symmetry in the adversaries' capacity for prosecuting the conflict through coercive means.

While these suggested structural factors may not invariably produce a reconsideration of goals and strategies, and while the list is certainly not exhaustive, at least it is an attempt to start an investigation into what are commonly experienced contexts that cause decision makers to question - if only to themselves - the efficacy of their party's existing strategies. Other recent approaches to illuminating the same problem take a somewhat shorter term view, and suggest that more immediate considerations are equally if not more important in affecting decision makers' choice of continuing efforts to win through coercion, or quitting and seeking a compromise solution. These concentrate on the matter of the timing of changes.

3.2. Reconsideration, Timing and Ripeness.

Another set of ideas that have indirectly to do with the question of when and under what circumstances leaders of parties in conflict begin to admit to themselves that present strategies are not working and to consider the need for alternatives are those concerned with the whole issue of "timing" and what circumstances contribute to the success of "peacemaking" initiatives. [Kriesberg & Thorson 1991] To a large degree this enquiry has been a response to the existence during the last decade of violent, intra-state conflicts which have proved both protracted and intractable to outside efforts to bring them to a resolution. Clearly, in the case of the former Yugoslavia; Rwanda, Burundi and the Congo; Chechnya; and the Sudan, all efforts at conflict resolution and even conflict management have had little success, leading some analysts to suggest that there may be circumstances in which the only kind of initiative likely to have any effect are those aimed initially at conflict reduction through peace enforcement and then at obtaining a coerced, compromise settlement under the implicit slogan; "Stop fighting and make up or we'll break your bloody neck." Such cases of intractable conflict have thus led to questions about when the only means of coping with conflict involve either doing nothing until circumstances change, or attempting to halt or deter further violence in the hope that the breathing space will give hot heads a chance to cool and leaders an opportunity to reconsider at least the likely costs of renewal.

One of the best known approaches to such issues has been the work of a group of scholars concerned with describing and explaining the existence of "ripe moments" during intractable conflicts. Prominent among those considering this component of the whole conflict resolution puzzle have been Bill Zartmann [1989] and Richard Haas [1990], who have popularised the ideas of a "hurting stalemate", an "imminent catastrophe" or an "enticing opportunity" being necessary preconditions for moving a resolution process from the stage of overt coercive towards that of discussion, bargaining and

negotiation. Subsequent work by Stephen Stedman [1991] and Marieke Kleibor [1994] have added a number of intra-party factors to the conception of "ripeness".

While it was not the main focus of any of the "ripeness" scholars, it is the case that their work does provide some answers to the question of what makes it likely that leaders of parties in conflict will begin to recognise that present strategies are not "working". For example, the implication of decision makers confronting an imminent catastrophe, whether it will affect one or both parties, is that the approaching disaster is likely to suggest even to the most devoted advocate of coercion, that the time to consider an alternative policy might be near. Similarly, the unambiguous recognition of a stalemate, even though slowly dawning, is likely to raise internal doubts and queries even in the mind of intransigents and enrages. Hence, while not filling in all the details of every component in an overall conflict resolution process, ideas about "ripeness" certainly help to understand the mechanisms involved in recognising failure, and to link this work to a more diverse set of ideas about the "pre-negotiation" stages of a resolution process [Saunders 1985] as well as to notions of what constitute necessary preparations for fruitful discussions and the achievement of an acceptable agreement between warring parties. [Stein 1989]. The "ripeness" analysis also adds details to the third approach to the question of when leadership groups begin to "change their minds" and provide contingent opportunities for outsiders to push forward a conflict resolution process.

3.3. Contingent Approaches.

Both approaches mentioned above tend to deal with one aspect of the conflict resolution process, even though neither was originally intended to throw light solely on the issue of what triggers a process of reconsideration in the minds of decision makers facing an impasse or looming disaster. In contrast, some theorists have attempted to develop an approach through the construction of a general model of a coherent and integrated process through which conflicts might be resolved or successful peacemaking initiatives launched and carried through. A central theme of much of this work is that appropriate ways of coping with conflicts depend very much on the nature and state of the conflict itself, so that how a resolution process starts and proceeds will depend on the fact that all conflicts are dynamic and one approach likely to be effective at one stage will make no headway at others. Stephen Ryan makes this point when discussing the differences between conflict management and conflict resolution, arguing that management processes - by which he means processes that involve outsiders deterring certain categories of behaviour and enforcing compromise settlements - can, on occasions, be the only way of handling intractable and violent ethnic conflicts, while at other times resolution processes are possible and optimal [Ryan 1990 pp.60-5] I noted above one of Ryan's conclusions arising from this analysis, namely that it will be appropriate to involve different types of actor - warriors, leaders, followers - in different conflict handling activities at different times in a resolution process.

Probably the best known and to date the most comprehensive attempt to produce an integrated approach to conflict resolution as a process is the "contingency model" developed by Ron Fisher and Loreleigh Keashley. The basic idea underlying this model is closely parallel to Ryan's approach; that a variety of strategies are needed in any conflict resolution process, and that different strategies are appropriate at different stages of the conflict. It follows from this basic principle that there has to be some sequencing of activities to match the developmental stages of an conflict, and that conflict resolution components used "out of sequence" are doomed to failure and, indeed, may do more harm than good. The authors are seeking "...a co-ordinated plan of interventions..." [Fisher & Keashley 1990 p.425] and they have adapted some earlier work by Beres and Schmidt [1982] to suggest a model of a process leading towards resolution in which initiatives are "contingent upon" the stage the conflict has reached.

Analysing a conflict process very broadly, the contingency model posits four basic stages through which it will pass;

[1] A discussion stage, during which the parties have apparently incompatible goals, but a commitment to maintaining the relationship is strong, perceptions reasonably accurate and there remains a belief in the possibility of joint gain.

[2] A polarisation stage, during which goal incompatibilities increase in intensity and number, trust and respect diminish, and distorted, negative perceptions emerge.

[3] A segregation stage, in which the overall relationship has become characterised by competition and hostility, it is assumed that only individual gains are possible and the conflict is now perceived as threatening basic needs and interests.

[4] A destruction stage, in which "...the primary intent of the parties is to destroy or at least subjugate each other through the use of violence..." [Fisher & Keashley; 1990]

For Fisher & Keashley, the general principle of moving the conflict towards a resolution is to initiate tactics and

processes that shift the conflict to lower levels of intensity - for example, from polarisation to segregation and thence to discussion - so that the conflict can be more easily resolved. In this model, truces, disengagements and settlements are simply stages of a general "de-escalation" towards a final resolution of the conflict.

Fisher and Keashley suggest a variety of strategies that might be employed at the different conflict "stages" to help the process of moving towards a resolution. For example, they argue that at the segregation stage, third parties might be able to assist the adversaries best by providing incentives to discourage them from undertaking hostile, provocative or coercive actions, while encouraging them to explore the underlying sources and dynamics of their conflict. Hence, a third party with material resources and some "leverage" might be most appropriately active at this point in the process. In contrast, at the polarisation stage, a third party simply able to supply consultation skills - help in understanding the perceptual and motivational dynamics of parties in conflict and in developing trust building activities - would be appropriate.

Naturally, it is during the destruction stage that the goals of third parties become simplest in principle yet most difficult in practice, as the start of any conflict resolution process demands a cessation of violence at the very least. The fourth stage, therefore, involves the forced separation of the warring parties and efforts to control the level of violence. In traditional terms, "peacekeeping" is paramount. In the framework used in this paper, the issues are firstly what factors - apart from outside intervention - might persuade decision makers of parties engaged in mutual destruction that the strategy is not working; and secondly what procedures might be effective in re-assuring the adversaries that there are "potential negotiators" on the other side, and not just implacably hostile enemies.

Details of the "contingency model" can be found in Fisher and Keashley's work (1983; 1990). The model links the various strategies deemed appropriate to each level of conflict, and the stage at which they might best be applied. One might raise questions about the neat sequencing of conflict stages implied by the model [real world protracted conflicts seem far messier than this, cycling back through different stages in an almost random manner and, on occasions, passing through some stages so rapidly that they seem to by-pass them completely]; and about its very broad gauge, macro level approach [minor changes in circumstances rather than major shifts from one stage to another have been known to completely wreck promising conflict resolution procedures] (6). However, the model does represent a fruitful attempt to bring together some of the previously fragmented work on conflict resolution procedures into a coherent scheme, and to integrate them into a co-ordinated approach to [potential] intervention, even if it is hardly a co-ordinated plan. Moreover, it raises some key questions about the component of decision makers' reconsideration of particular strategies and the occasions when this is most likely to occur; about factors involved in the sub process of suspending coercion and directed violence; and also about how the transition from the fourth stage of mutual destruction to the third of continuing segregation might be affected by an increasing awareness that the other side might be willing to engage in some alternative process for finding a durable, mutually acceptable solution.

4. Components of a Conflict Resolution Process; Mutual Willingness and Tentative Engagement.

Practically it is difficult to separate the next two closely entwined components of any overall conflict resolution process. Once the leadership of one of the adversaries - or some key members thereof - have firmly concluded that current strategies are unlikely to gain the goals sought and that some other strategy is needed, the key questions for them will revolve around the issues of whether there is any willingness on the part of their adversary to search for alternatives and whether some low cost and non-threatening process might be available as an alternative to mutual coercion. The two issues are obviously closely connected, as the availability of an acceptable process - whether it be discussions, negotiations, explorations, or the use of some formal third party as mediator or arbitrator - is irrelevant without the other side's willingness to participate seriously, while even a mutual willingness to find alternatives would be fruitless without a process being available that at least offers roughly equal benefits to all participants.

Two basic processes seem to be relevant to this aspect of conflict resolution, which is usually considered as a major aspect of pre-negotiation and involves, in Herb Kelman's words, the search for and confirmation of there being a genuine "negotiating partner". The first of these involves a bilateral process of indicating to one another that both sides of a conflict are at least willing to consider alternative processes for reaching a solution. The second involves the organisation and conducting of various types of preparatory meetings by some third party at which participants from all the conflicting parties can explore one another's willingness to contemplate alternative means and commitment to goals, as well as the aspirations and concerns that underlie these goals and the possible existence of alternative solutions. There are a number of different methods that have been used in practising this second type of procedure, and I will discuss three of these below; process promoting workshops [Folz 1977]; sustained dialogue [Saunders & Slim 1994]; and the ARIA process [Rothman 1992 & 1997] However, I first need to make some comments on the process of de-escalation and confidence building.

4.1. Long Range Confidence Building.

A second component of a conflict resolution process involves leaders who have come to the conclusion that an alternative to coercion is likely to offer greater benefits than continuing coercion attempting to reassure themselves that there is a good chance that others in their adversary might also be interested in exploring this possibility. Frequently, this process of "searching for a partner" has to be carried out bilaterally, at long range, although the use of third parties in an informal "go-between" role, with the task of exploring the other side's "willingness to talk" is a variant on this model of this tentative exploration processes.

In traditional terms, the focus of this part of a resolution process is on de-escalatory processes and how these might be successfully initiated and maintained. Thinking systematically about the component had its origins during the 1960's when what remained a basic conundrum was first posed; how to indicate to an adversary [in most cases the Soviet Union] that one party to a conflict was willing to talk about peaceful alternatives to confrontation and conflict, but not willing to abandon its vital interests or make concessions under duress. At that time the puzzle was posed as a search was for an alternative to war or surrender, but one aspect of the thinking of that era was on the issue of how to reassure leaders "on the other side" that there existed a genuine interest in alternative means of achieving desired goals, or preserving essential interests. In the early 1960's two of the more interesting proposals were for a process of "gradualism" [Etzioni 1962] and a parallel suggestion for a unilateral strategy of Graduated and Reciprocal Initiatives in Tension-reduction [GRIT] originating in the work of Charles Osgood [1962] and analysed further in a series of studies by Stephen Lindsfold [1986]. The latter idea suggested a series of graduated steps which, if carefully prepared and executed, could signal to an adversary the existence of a set of leaders willing to engage in a new and more conciliatory form of inter-action, but ready to retaliate if the target of the strategy sought to take advantage of the range of concessions embedded in the overall GRIT process.

Since that time, work which dealt indirectly with processes of reassurance and re-evaluation has been regular, if not prolific. Kriesberg [1992] has made some interesting suggestions about the nature of successful concessions and concession making, Pruitt and his colleagues have analysed similar processes in both simulation and real world studies [Pruitt & Carnevale 1993] and I have tried to summarise this work and analyse the hazards of de-escalation under the label of "gestures of conciliation" [Mitchell 1991; 2000]

The 1980's saw a renewed interest in this question of reassurance through work on the whole issue of how to construct a military defence while at the same time lessening the sense of threat to others posed by such defence measures. This effort involved much discussion of processes of "confidence building" and of "tension reducing" methods [CBMs and TRMs], at the heart of which lay a central conundrum usually phrased as how to "build trust" between current adversaries to the point where both might be able to engage in an alternative relationship that permitted some efforts to find a durable and acceptable resolution of the issues in conflict. Given that this component focuses on how to start a resolution process between essentially mistrusting adversaries, it might be better to aim at reducing mistrust to the point where "...we believe that the other party will reciprocate rather than exploit our concessions..." [Pruitt & Olczak 1997 p.72].

Whatever formula is adopted, however, the issue of what methods might best be used to explore whether the other side is genuinely ready to begin still has not been settled unambiguously. Examples such as President Eisenhower's "Open Skies" initiative at the height of the Cold war in 1955, Egyptian President Anwar Sadat's visit to Israel in 1977, or National Security Adviser Kissinger's trip to Beijing during the first Nixon administration suggest that the probability of success is enhanced if the conciliatory moves are unexpected, reasonably costly, made from a position of strength, and not reversible. [Mitchell 1991; Pruitt & Carnevale 1993] However, these particular examples may only offer a rough and ready guide to leaders of conflicting parties who wish to reassure themselves that there are some leaders on the other side willing to regard their initial moves in a positive light.

4.2. Preparatory Engagement

The second major approach to obtaining reassurance about an opponent's will to participate in a resolution process involves a still tentative but more direct and hence more perilous procedure -that of engaging in exploratory contacts which both confirm all parties' willingness to engage and - in most cases - model the optimal form of engagement for an effective reconceptualisation component of a conflict resolution process.

In the mid-1970's, when the practice of holding informal and unofficial discussions about intractable conflicts - Cyprus, Kashmir, Israel/Palestine - was becoming more frequent, the political scientist, William Folz [1977], suggested that an

analytical distinction could and should be made between those meetings or "workshops" that were primarily aimed at building contacts and removing misperceptions and misapprehensions between notables and opinion leaders from both sides, and those which, involving participants close to formal decision makers, aimed at dealing with the substantive issues in conflict and with possible ways of resolving these. To those who argued that the inevitable misperceptions, miscommunications and misapprehensions of leaders, warriors and followers were key issues, even the analytical distinction seemed far fetched and most accounts of unofficial workshops, inter-active conflict resolution and collaborative, analytical problem solving - what became known in the 1980's as "Track 2" processes - stress that dealing with the perceptual and attitudinal components of a conflict are intimately intertwined with the substantive issues that underlie intractability.

However, Folz's distinction can be a useful one in that it emphasises that some sub-processes in conflict resolution are mainly focused on relationship building, on correcting misperceptions, on diminishing mistrust, on demonstrating commitment to a non-violent outcome, and on removing at least some of the wariness even unofficial participants feel when dealing with "the enemy". In short, the main focus of what Folz called process promoting workshops was on reassurance - convincing both sides that the other was ready to engage in some serious and official conflict resolution effort and was not simply using the possibility as a means of disarming its adversary, practically and psychologically. Problem solving workshops, on the other hand, while still inevitably being concerned with removing some fear, suspicion and hostility, were intended to be more focused on analysing the issues in conflict, on exploring underlying interests and in devising possible solutions, some of which might prove officially acceptable to their parties' leaders and a basis for a solution.

Practically speaking it is still difficult to distinguish between Track 2 initiatives that are intended mainly to provide reassurance and those which are intended to facilitate analysis and to search for solutions, but there are clear emphases in most of the individual examples of Track 2 initiatives and in the types of procedure that have been developed over the last 20 years to form part of conflict resolution processes. The two discussed below both contain elements of what Folz would describe as "problem solving" but their main focus is clearly on relationship building and what I have earlier called "reassurance".

4.3. Sustained Dialogue.

The idea for a long term, "sustained" dialogue between influentials from opposing parties originated from the experience of the long series of meetings, starting at Dartmouth College in New Hampshire in 1960 between leaders and opinion makers from the Soviet Union and the United States, a series which continued until 1992 and the break up of the Soviet Union. [Cousins 1977] From the original meetings arose other dialogue groups, most prominently the Regional Conflicts Task Force, which was originally established in 1981 through a joint concern over the tendency of the two superpowers to compete via proxies in regional conflicts. [Saunders 1999]. The Task Force continued to meet, usually twice a year, after 1992 as a joint Russian-US enterprise, and during its lifetime has held a series of continuing dialogues on such conflicts as Afghanistan, Tajikistan and on race relations in both Russia and the USA.

Two of the main participants have published analytical accounts of these exchanges, and argued strongly that intractable conflicts, by their very nature, are usually not ready for traditional negotiation or even mediation unless some preparatory process has been undertaken (7). Moreover, this should be a long term dialogue that is "...more than just good conversation and less than a structured negotiation..." and which is designed to change destructive and conflictful relationships over time. [Saunders & Slim 1994 p.43] The procedure - or "sub-process" in the terms used in this Paper - is designed to enable participants to "...probe the dynamics of even the most destructive relationship..." and thus it "...provides a context for developing and changing relationships..." [Ibid.]

Although Harold Saunders and Randa Slim stress that the procedure itself is both open ended and flexible, they describe five stages of a typical dialogue which provide a direction and sense of purpose to the initiative. The first stage is one whereby the parties and participants "decide to engage". The organisers emphasise that they aim to involve "...individuals who are respected in their communities and are listened to by top leaders..." [Ibid p.44], with the eventual aim of spreading "...the dialogue experience to the community to lay foundations for changing relationships..." [Ibid p.45]. The first is obviously one of the more difficult stages [none are easy] for at least some leaders in each party must be willing to explore the possibility offered by contacts with the enemy; some initial lessening of mistrust must precede initial reassurance.

If the organisers are successful in overcoming this resistance to dialogue, then the procedure can move into other stages. Saunders and Slim suggest that the initial stage of the actual dialogue involves jointly "mapping the relationship", getting the main problems onto the table, identifying the significance of the relationships responsible for creating these

problems, and determining which concrete problems should be discussed in depth at future stages. Once the procedural dynamics have led to a situation in which the participants "...can talk to each other, instead of just stating views..." [Ibid, p.49] , the dialogue can move onto the third stage, that of probing underlying relationships, examining the changes that would be needed to deal with the issues in conflict and analysing whether the will to change, and to overcome obstacles to change, exists. The fourth stage involves the participants trying out scenarios for change and the fifth a discussion of what practical moves might be undertaken to put certain of the scenarios into action.

It is at this point that Folz's distinction between process promoting and problem solving becomes most blurred as far as the sustained dialogue procedure is concerned. Saunders and Slim suggest that there are - broadly speaking - four possible options for the discussion group. The first option is that of personal use, which involves simply learning from, and perhaps sharing insights and experiences from the dialogue group with others within both parties - opinion leaders, notables, or local influentials on the one hand, officials on the other. A second option might be to enlarge the group by inviting to future meetings other participants, possibly officials and decision makers, possibly to use a similar procedure on other problems identified but not yet dealt with. A third is to use the initial dialogue to proliferate other such groups, with the aim of creating "...a critical mass of people who recognise the need for changing relationships and are committed to action for doing so..." [Ibid. p.55] Each of these might be viewed a mainly process promoting but equally, sustained dialogue participants might, according to Saunders and Slim, become an action group, lobbying decision makers on both sides to make sure that their jointly considered if unofficial recommendations are considered officially and, if possible, implemented. If the main benefit of the first three options, and their major contribution to conflict resolution, is the deeper insight participants gain into the obstacles and opportunities each party faces, together with the experience that they gain from working jointly and perhaps extending the use of the procedure, then the last option clearly involve practical and political problem solving, and makes a direct input into the search for a solution to the conflict at an official level. In our terms, it crosses the boundary between tentative reassurance and re-evaluation - a serious and influential analysis of issues plus an exploration of realistic options and obstacles thereto. As such, sustained dialogue clearly becomes a procedure that is being used to push the resolution process much further than initial engagement for reassurance -and it is, of course, none the worse for that. As Saunders and Slim emphasise, in this case "...Tangible impact is possible..." [Ibid p.56]

4.4. The ARIA Approach

A second procedure which can and has been used to provide reassurance and a sense of opportunity to decision makers through participation [if, usually, indirect participation] in a resolutionary interaction is the ARIA process, developed and used by Jay Rothman in a variety of protracted and often violent conflict situations, many dealing with problems of identity and other highly intractable issues. [Rothman 1992 and 1997] As with the procedure developed by Saunders and Slim, the ARIA process can be used as the basis of a pre-negotiation stage of any resolution process, either as an initial means of building contacts, providing reassurance and removing mistrust between members of parties in conflict; or as a Track 2 arena for analysing the conflict, for exploring possible alternatives, and then for having a direct impact on the official, Track 1 level of formal policy making and official conflict resolution. Which of these tasks is emphasised in a particular ARIA initiative depends to some degree on the purposes of the organisers and facilitators, but mainly on the nature and level of the participants. While Saunders and Slim aim at involving respected but non-official individuals, Rothman has been eclectic in his work, in some cases involving influentials, in others decision makers themselves, especially when the process takes place at a local, grass roots level as in the conflict over the future of Jerusalem

Briefly, and again like the process of sustained dialogue, the ARIA process involves four inter linked stages, which would probably also add up to five if Rothman included, as an initial stage, the process of involving inevitably suspicious and hostile antagonists as participants. The first is a stage of Antagonism, in which participants discuss the nature of, and reasons for the conflict in which they are involved, surfacing the suspicions, hostilities, attribution of blame and sense of outrage that attend most protracted conflicts. As in most resolution sub-processes this is invariably a painful stage of an inter-action, but one which is necessary if participants are ever to be ready to move on from the kind of "adversarial framing" that typifies parties in intractable conflicts. As Rothman himself writes, parties' "... conflict frames must be made explicit and thus available for scrutiny, evaluation and reframing..." [1997 p.21], and such frames later provide a bench mark of what, in future, must be avoided.

The second stage, Resonance, switches the focus of the discussion to why and how the conflict has reached the stage it has, and what are the underlying interests, values and needs that have produced the repetitive cycle of coercion and counter-coercion. Rothman argues that much of this stage is based on the principle of "reflexivity", in which participants are asked to stand outside themselves and ask about their own reasons for their past and present goals and aspirations,

and for their past behaviour. The objective of this stage is to bring participants to a realisation that their aspirations, concerns and needs can be fulfilled, but "...only with the cooperation of those who most vigorously oppose them..." [Rothman 1999; p.xiii]. If it is successful, then participants gain a greater understanding not only of the relationship of their own goals and public positions to their underlying interests and needs, but also to the inter-active nature of conflict dynamics and how their own actions have contributed to the others' reactions, and vice versa.

As with sustained dialogue, the last two stages of ARIA can be viewed simply as further confirmation and reassurance of interest in and commitment to the search for durable solutions, or as an integral part of a further sub-process of conflict resolution - the search for solutions and the confrontation of obstacles. The Invention stage involves participants in a process of exploration and creation, such that alternative outcomes and strategies are discussed in the light of the analysis and self analysis carried out in the Resonance stage. The Action stage, in turn, involves participants in the issue of what might be done, separately or jointly, to have insights, possible scenarios, alternative strategies and potentially durable solution recognised, reviewed and hopefully taken up by decision makers on both sides, if this, rather than simply providing a striking experience and an interactive model for participants, is the final objective of the ARIA initiative.

It can easily be seen that both ARIA and sustained dialogue are procedures that can be adapted so that they take the form of anything from efforts to explore whether both adversaries have a readiness to engage in some form of official conflict resolution through longer term efforts to build up constituencies in both parties that favour non-violent resolutionary outcomes to probably rarer cases when they directly pave the way for more formal efforts at conflict resolution dealing directly with substantive issues and possible outcomes. Other procedures are more singly concerned with this latter objective, and more expressly designed to be re-evaluation components of conflict resolution, focused on analysis of issues, exploration of options and transfer of alternatives to officials and decision makers.

5. Exploration, Analysis and Transfer; Workshops and the MACBE Model.

If the emphasis of some types of initiative is on promoting long term understanding between influential members of adversary parties and providing them with an experience of working with members of "the enemy", other types of meeting are designed to further a conflict resolution process more directly - that is by providing an input into official decision making circles that will suggest the possibility of a mutually beneficial solution and outline how such a solution might be achieved. In doing this, the form of discussions involved are directly intended to address the issues in conflict, the bargaining positions of the adversaries, the interests and values underlying these positions and then to explore possible mutually acceptable outcomes by creating new alternatives and possible means of arriving at one or more of those outcomes through practical, political activities to be undertaken by officials and leaders.

With this objective in mind, such procedures are clearly more concerned with political problem solving, in Folz's sense, a concomitant being that the participants, while still unofficial, are normally much closer to formal decision makers in both parties that is the case in many process promoting initiatives. Some writers have even referred to this type of procedure as being at the Track 1+1/2 level, to indicate its close connection with official efforts to find a solution for a conflict. Moreover, while most argue that the most useful circumstances for such quasi-official inter-actions are either before official level discussions occur [prenegotiation] or during the implementation stage of any formal agreement [post-negotiation], others - notably Ron Fisher [1997] and Herb Kelman [1999] - have made the argument that such activities can be highly useful even while formal talks are in progress [paranegotiation].

Whatever the validity of any of these arguments about the timing of the various types of problem solving procedure, most analysts writing about this form of conflict resolution process are agreed that such an informal arena does provide a unique opportunity for parties in conflict to engage in deep analysis of the problems they confront, the needs underlying public goals and positions, the availability of jointly managed and mutually beneficial solutions and the possibility of creating these, and of the steps by which these might best be achieved; and the best means of directly convincing unconvinced decision makers of the possibilities for creative solutions that do not involve compromise or the need for further coercion.

5.1. Interactive Problem Solving.

The chief method by which quasi-official problem solving contributes to conflict resolution processes is through a variety of similar processes that have come to be called inter-active problem solving by some of the major practitioners, the origins of which go back to some of the exercises discussed on the Introduction and carried out in London during the 1960's by John Burton and his colleagues, when the process was known as "controlled communication". [Burton, 1969;

1987]. Other familiar labels include "collaborative, analytical problem solving" and "inter-active conflict resolution" but whatever the formal title all of these processes share a number of things in common. To quote Herb Kelman, they all "...create opportunities for politically influential representatives of conflicting parties...to engage in a micro-process characterised by exploratory interaction, generation of ideas and creative problem solving..." [1999 p.3 italics added] Kelman makes the point that such interactions - "workshops" in the common parlance - should not be confused with official negotiations, as they are unofficial and nonbinding, but they should be closely linked to negotiations and can make a major contribution to the latter in that they "...provide an opportunity for sharing perspectives, exploring options and joint thinking that are not readily available at the official negotiating table..." [Ibid p.4] Interactive problem solving can produce ideas to be fed into the negotiating process and - because of the close linkages between the initiative and official decision makers - can be fed in persuasively and directly.

Kelman argues that effective interactive problem solving makes three major contributions to official efforts to resolve a conflict - and this point again emphasises the lack of a clear distinction in practice between process promoting and problem solving initiatives. Firstly, it fosters a "sense of possibility" - that a solution to the conflict is possible and feasible - the re-evaluation component of the process. It achieves this by removing a feeling of hopelessness and inevitability that frequently afflicts parties locked in a protracted conflict from which no escape seems possible, and in practice by constructing "best case scenarios" to counter-balance the inevitably pessimistic self fulfilling futures that arise from adversaries always believing the worst of all of each other [Kelman 1992 p.89]. Secondly, it helps to construct what Kelman [1999 p.23] calls a "...political environment conducive to negotiation..." a major component of which is mutual reassurance. Thirdly, the process can encourage or at least emphasise the need for "a shift in the nature of political discourse..." [Ibid p.24] and it is this change which - aside from any specific ideas and insights, alternatives and options, paths and procedures generated - can have the most effect upon those in each party officially charged with finding some solution.

The precise format taken by interactive problem solving initiatives varies somewhat - and there are clear connections between such initiatives and both the ARIA and "sustained dialogue" processes discussed above. However, its various forms all clearly play a major role in fulfilling most of the necessary analytical and creative functions that arose from the previous review of components and sub-processes of the whole conflict resolution process. With some justification the opportunity for a deep analysis of underlying interests values and needs is generally regarded as a key component of lasting conflict resolution, as are the processes of creativity in devising outcomes to fulfil those underlying needs, and of ingenuity in charting a course towards such solutions. Interactive problem solving at the quasi-official level offers a unique opportunity for indulging in these activities that are rarely practised during protracted and intense conflicts. Whether such resolutionary sub-processes can ever be incorporated into procedures at the official, Track 1 level remains a matter for debate. Can official negotiators ever treat a conflict as a problem shared, ever direct their efforts towards solving this shared problem, ever do more than produce minimally acceptable solutions of division or substitution, ever go very far into analysing each others' fear or concerns and see part of their task of providing mutual reassurances? The debate of this is on-going [Kelman 1999; Mitchell 1999], but what does seem clear is that interactive problem solving can produce goods that contribute to a resolution of intractable conflicts, provided these can find their way into the minds of decision makers, into negotiating rooms and, longer term, into the mainstream of diplomacy through an adoption of some of the basic principles underlying the approach.

5.2. The MACBE Principles.

One recent attempt to produce an integrated scheme for a conflict resolution process does lay out clearly a number of basic principles that might well inform conflict resolution processes, whether these are used at Track 1 or any other level. The MACBE "model" [Pruitt & Olczak 1995] also has some things in common with Fisher and Keashley's consultation approach, but abandons the implied linearity of their model, together with the idea of stages, in favour of a "multi-modal" approach, advocating different procedures at different times and in different situations.

The main principle underlying Dean Pruitt and Paul Olczak's approach is that all conflicts should be treated as inter-active systems, as should the parties in conflict. The latter, in turn, can be regarded as five interdependent sub-systems, so that any process which seeks to move the conflict towards a resolution will need to affect those five sub-systems and their inter-connections.

The five sub-systems under consideration for each party are that party's: [1] Motivation; [2] Affect; [3] Cognition; [4] Behaviour; [5] Environment. Hence, the authors' choice of the acronym MACBE to describe their model. They argue that, in relatively less intense conflicts, it is likely that only one or two of these sub-systems or modes [e.g. hostile or resentful feelings] will be involved, so that efforts aimed at affecting these may cause a "ripple effect" that spills over and corrects

minor difficulties existing in other sub-systems, so being enough to move the conflict towards resolution.

In contrast, highly escalated and intractable conflicts will need remedial action to be taken at all levels and on all sub-systems; none can be neglected. Pruitt and Olczak argue that only such a "multi-modal" approach can deal finally and completely with the durable "conflict inducing structures" that would otherwise remain to re-assert the patterns of conflict in the future. Such conflicts require a "broad assault" and they suggest seven components of a successful conflict resolution strategy ["classes of remedies" in the authors' words] that will deal with such durable structures:

- [1] Altering behaviour by developing negotiating opportunities.
- [2] Creating a "ripe moment" by changing motivations so that both parties wish to escape from the conflict.
- [3] Changing cognitions from a mistrusting to a trusting framework.
- [4] Developing problem solving, analytical and negotiating skills as an alternative to coercive and violent behaviour.
- [5] Providing opportunities and models for in depth analysis of the sources and dynamics of the conflict, and of the search for remedies.
- [6] Reducing aspirations and expectations.
- [7] Restructuring the socio-economic environment, especially by establishing conflict management systems which will be available to deal with future conflicts.

Pruitt and Olczak argue strongly that which activities are necessary to move towards a resolution are chiefly determined by the intensity and intractability of the conflict. The greater the severity of the conflict, the more a multi-modal approach is required. "...The parties must become motivated to escape their conflict, trust must develop, problem solving skills must be honed, perceptions and feelings must be uncovered and dealt with, unattainable aspirations must be reduced, divisive alliances must be eliminated, and the parties must negotiate a new mode of dealing with each other..." [Pruitt & Olczak 1995; p.81]

While the contingency model is clear about the order in which its various strategies and procedures are to be utilised, the MACBE model is more ambiguous. In arguing for flexibility, Pruitt and Olczark make the important point that intractable inter-communal conflict takes place between parties within which there are usually differences of viewpoint, interest and [hence] goals, so that there are usually some elements within each adversary ready to begin a search for a resolution of the conflict well before the bulk of the "realists" who would continue the strategy of coercion and violence. A start to many of their suggested seven procedures might well be made with these elements ["doves"] well before one can be made with party leaders or mainstream rank and file.

Another substantial gap in the MACBE model is the issue of when, whether and how third parties might be able to help in the tasks of creating a ripe moment, decreasing the levels of mistrust and hostility between the adversaries or constructing a conflict management system that will be available to deal with a recurrence of the conflict or other disputes that may arise in future. A role for third parties in a conflict resolution process has been implied in most of the above discussion of various resolution procedures, but not dealt with directly. It is to this last component of conflict resolution processes that I now briefly turn.

6. Third Party Contributions; A Functional Model.

Unfortunately, not much of the current literature on the role of third parties in conflict resolution tries to link traditional views about peacemaking with ideas about what might facilitate resolution as opposed to compromise. There is, it is true, a large and diverse set of ideas about the "peacemaking" activities of third parties, acting as facilitators, mediators or conciliators in protracted conflicts. Much of it has been concerned with a debate about the effectiveness of interested third parties with "leverage" [Touval 1982; Rubin 1981] compared to neutral third parties without significant influence or resources [Burton 1987]. The debate has revolved around the question of whether biased and powerful intermediaries can only produce temporary solution to a conflict, which "work" because they are supported by sanctions, either negative or positive; or whether such a power and resource dependent process might be able to produce a genuine resolution [or long term transformation] of a conflict which satisfies the underlying interests of the adversaries and removes the reasons for their antagonism. Analysts seem rarely to answer directly the question as to whether and in what circumstances third parties can help to facilitate any of the ten components of a conflict resolution process discussed in Section 3 of this paper - at least much beyond the point of suggesting that powerful third parties should be able to use military force to pressure adversaries, willing or not, into a temporary cessation of violence that will enable others to help the parties towards some compromise solution, deemed desirable in comparison with continued violence or the fate of being permanently peace kept by outsiders.

A full discussion of processes by which parties in conflict might be brought to the point of relaxing efforts to harm one another so that other forms of non-coercive or non-bargaining interaction can be tried must await a further Working Paper, as must a consideration of processes that bring about long term, widespread changes in attitudes, beliefs and stereotypes within adversaries. However, it is possible to sketch an outline of the kind of contributions that third parties can make to a conflict resolution process, and thus to fill in some of the gaps left in the discussion so far. In addition it should be possible to indicate, at least, where third party roles from processes such as ARIA, problem solving workshops, or confidence building might fit into a more general picture.

Starting from the original premise that any conflict resolution process is likely to be complex and long drawn out and to involve a number of component parts, there will clearly be many tasks and functions to be fulfilled before any intractable conflict can be moved towards a resolution. Hence, one way of thinking about a process of resolution is to ask what tasks need to be carried out, at what point in the process, and by whom might these best be performed. In a number of other papers, [Mitchell 1992 and 1994] I have suggested that answers to these questions, however tentative, point towards using an approach that maps out a sequence of activities in the form of a number of third party roles that need to be performed successfully if the process is to reach a successful culmination. The overall process starts with reconsideration and reassurance components, which can usefully involve third parties in exploratory contacts with the rival parties with a view to:

[1] ascertaining whether either or both have concluded that present strategies are leading nowhere and have any interest in an alternative to continuing coercion;

[2] reassuring the adversaries that the other side is not implacably against the exploration of alternatives to mutual coercion or the abandonment of "victory above all".

[3] exploring a range of alternative processes for de-escalating the conflict, initiating an exchange of ideas, and starting towards a resolution;

Following this, a number of other key functions will need to be performed successfully, each contributing differently to the development of the process by which parties can find themselves in some situation or circumstances in which a mutual exploration of reasons and options becomes feasible. Each of these functions can be seen as a necessary condition for the coming into play of subsequent functions in the sequence. [See Figure 3 overleaf]. Finally, following the achievement of de-escalation, discussion and analysis, the creation of options, and the transfer of insights to the official level, followed - hopefully - by effective and flexible negotiation, the conclusion of a mutually acceptable agreement that fulfils parties interests and values, and the implementation of that agreement [or series of agreements], I posit the need for a reconciler role to be carried out by one or more institutions, either from within the parties themselves or from outside. The functions carried out in this final stage involve long term efforts to alter attitudes and perceptions, to rebuild relationships and to restructure the pattern of inter-action and exchange between the previously warring parties. I discuss this last process, and the role of third parties therein in greater detail in Chapter 3 and then move on to some practical ways of doing this is the rest of the Handbook.

7. Conclusion.

I ended Chapter 1 by remarking that the road towards the resolution of any protracted and intractable conflict was long, difficult and unmarked for much of its length. What I have tried to do in this Chapter is to begin with the conception of "conflict resolution" as a process having number of distinguishable components or "sub-processes", rather than as an end state to be achieved, and then simply to review some efforts to map out a number of the better understood component parts of this complicated process. All of these efforts, approaches or models try, to some degree, to suggest appropriate principles or strategies to be applied at different points in the "life cycle" of an intractable conflict, or at different developmental "stages" of such a conflict. None of them is wholly successful, however, in providing more than a sketch map of a part of the conflict resolution "road", but they do indicate what a really helpful road map might look like, and what details need to be filled in before such a map can be of much use to policy makers.

Even when we have such a map, however, and we have some guide to the manner in which intractable conflicts might best be resolved the task for conflict research will not be ended. The whole point about conflict resolution, whether regarded as an end condition or as a process, is that it assumes that the conflict "resolvers" - whoever they are - have to deal with a problem that has already gone through at least one escalatory cycle to a point or plateau of sustained mutual coercion and violence - to Zartman's "hurting stalemate", Fisher and Keashley's level of "destruction" or Pruitt and Olczak's "high intensity". Contemporary conflict resolution thus resembles fire fighting, in that both wait until the conflict is

intense or the house is on fire.

It seems clear that the real challenge for conflict research remains in the realm of conflict avoidance or prevention - of "doing something" about conflict as it emerges or before it escalates. Clearly, part of the business of conflict avoidance will involve new maps and models - at the least the addition of an "early warning" or monitoring task to the functional model outlined in Section 6 above, and probably the provision of wholly new maps of conflict emergence. At the most, it will demand a new way of thinking about handling conflicts that involves anticipatory action and clear analysis of sources. I will try to begin a discussion of the nature of conflict prevention in a future Working Paper, but can close this one by emphasising that conflict research still has much to learn and we have much to think about as we and the discipline move into the 21st Century.

ENDNOTES.

(1) Given the current increase in the use of interpositional military forces, it is important to make a distinction between traditional peacekeeping and more recent peace-enforcement. The major differences are usually taken to be that the former takes place with the consent of the parties in conflict, while the latter can occur without such consent being sought or given but simply on the decision of some parts of "the international community", usually embodied in a regional or international organisation such as the CSCE or the UN. [In many cases, the conflict has resulted in the fragmentation of authority within the adversaries, so that there are no "centres of authority" that can decide to issue an invitation for military interposition.]

Behaviourally speaking, the crucial difference is more likely to be that the adversaries have not yet reached the stage at which both desire some kind of a lull in their mutually coercive efforts [one or both see that their goals might still be achieved through violence, or that the costs of coercive strategies remain bearable.] The end result is likely to be the continuation of the violence, with some of it being directed at the peace enforcing body, which is usually not strong enough to impose a cessation of the violence.

(2) Ambassador Simon Shamir; personal communication.

(3) Michael Harbottle, who originally used the term "peace servicing" rather than peace-building, emphasises the reconstruction and development aspects of the procedure, and talks about the "...practical implementation of social changes through socio-economic reconstruction and development..." [Harbottle 1979]

(4) An alternative, analytical approach might be to start with questions such as:

[a] What factors, circumstances or procedures lead parties to admit to themselves that strategies of coercion are not succeeding or are even becoming counter-productive. What processes are involved in arriving at that threshold ?

[b] What factors or circumstances are likely to lead parties to conclude that adversaries are willing to consider searching for alternative means and outcomes and for solutions other than outright victory ? What processes are involved at arriving at that turning point ?

[c] What factors or processes are likely to lead to parties' leaders being willing to sponsor or even permit some members of their party to discuss openly with some members of the adversary underlying interests, aspirations, fears and concerns ? What sort of a process would, by its nature, make them willing to participate; what sort of arena might be constructed to make such a discussion non-threatening and its outcome credible ?

[d] What sorts of participants would be the most appropriate for such meetings ?

[e] What would be the nature of the discussion that could take place within such an arena that would permit the exploration of underlying interests, a joint search for mutually satisfactory solutions and a joint analysis of the obstacles to such a solution and possible means of dealing with these ?

[f] What processes would have to be available for "selling" possible solutions to the remainder of the party [leaders, influentials and followers] and implementing any agreements reached at the discussions [They would have to be taken over by Track 1 people at some stage !]

[g] What might be the most useful roles played by third parties in such a process ?

(5) The bulk of this early work has been usefully summarised and evaluated by Fisher [1972 & 1983] and by Hill [1982]

(6) For example, Elmore Jackson reports how a punitive Israeli raid into the Gaza Strip in 1955 spoiled a promising initiative to restore communication between the Egyptian and Israeli governments following the 1956 Suez War. [Jackson 1983]

(7) Additional sustained dialogues of this type have taken place between notables representing parties from the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and from the conflict in Tajikistan.

CHAPTER 3

RESOLVING INTRACTABLE CONFLICTS

In Chapter 1, I made a general case for the argument that conflicts are inherently resolvable, in the sense that there exist solutions - at least in theory - for the issues and goal incompatibilities that underlie coercive behaviour and violence. I argued that acceptable solutions were possible both because incompatible goals were mutable and because they frequently represented underlying interests that could often prove compatible and even complementary. This position I contrasted with the rather more widespread view that many if not most conflicts are inherently irresolvable, so that the best one could hope for is some compromise settlement involving division or substitution, or some temporary form of management which avoids the worst excesses of unregulated and unrestrained pursuit of "our just rights and aspirations".

In this Chapter I want to apply a conflict resolution approach to two types of conflict which appear particularly resistant to efforts at any permanent resolution but which are alarmingly prevalent in the global society of the early 21st Century. These are conflicts involving territory and those involving ethnicity. Both seem to be examples of extreme intractability, at best open to compromise solutions achieved through coercive strategies and hard, positional bargaining. However, I would still argue that both types of conflict can, on closer examination, reveal ways of diminishing their apparent intractability and even of achieving a "resolution".

1. Territorial Goals and Irresolvability.

At first sight it appears self evident that conflicts over territory are the paradigm case of the zero sum conflict, where one party's gain axiomatically becomes the other's loss. If two governments both claim some islands, how is it possible, even in theory, to argue that there could be a solution to this goal incompatibility other than win, lose or divide? If a white farmer in South Africa wishes to retain the land sold to his family by the government, and its previously expelled tribal owners wish the land to be returned, what chances are there for any kind of "positive sum" outcome? If two nations wish to have one city as their capital, how can this possibly be regarded as anything other than a win-lose situation, with no "integrative solution"?

The number and intractability of conflicts over territory in the current "world order" are undeniable and depressing. Communities, ethnic groups, and nations all become parties to conflicts with "possession" of territory as their core issue, and goal incompatibilities about cities, islands, or whole regions lead to enmities, sanctions and wars. The Armenian community of Ngorno Karabagh seeks independence for that territory; the government of Azerbaijan seeks to maintain its country's "territorial integrity" and unity by retaining Ngorno Karabagh. The British and the Argentine governments both claim sovereign authority over those islands the British call "the Falklands" and the Argentines "the Malvinas". The Israelis and the Palestinians both claim Jerusalem as a holy city, as a capital city and as "their" city.

In none of these cases does it appear that both parties can, even theoretically, attain in their entirety the goals they so obviously and so ardently desire. Returning to a previous metaphor, disputes over territory seem to fall into the category of "cheese" disputes rather than "cat" [or baby] disputes, in that the only obviously available type of solution seems to be one of division - although solutions of substitution are also possible. Both types will clearly be of a compromise nature, with solutions of division involving a sharing out of the good in dispute, so that each adversary gets some, but neither gets all. Hence, there will often still be a good chance that one or other - or even both - of the parties will remain dissatisfied with the compromise and liable to try to overturn a settlement deemed unfair once a future opportunity arises.

1.1. Territory and the Concept of "Fair" Division.

The theoretical and practical problem of constructing acceptable and hence stable and long-lasting solution for conflicts over territory has led in recent years to major intellectual efforts to discover some systematic rules and procedures for constructing solutions of division which are "fair" - and hence to a consideration of what might constitute "fairness" generally in situations ostensibly calling for division and compromise (1). It is important to recognise at the start of any discussion of the issue of "fairness" in devising solutions that two rather different aspects of the conception are involved. Firstly, there is the matter of whether the procedure for arriving at a particular division is fair, and secondly whether the outcome itself is fair - or given that, like many things, fairness is in the eye of the beholder, whether it is deemed to be fair by those involved. The commonest example of a fair procedure leading - usually - to a fair outcome is the old "I divide, you choose" procedure, which operates to ensure that the divider has little interest in making anything other than a 50/50 division - or as near this as possible - on the grounds that the chooser will otherwise simply take up the bigger proportion

(2).

A whole series of more sophisticated methods of making a fair division have been developed in recent decades for both divisible and indivisible goods and are thoroughly discussed by Steven Brams and Alan Taylor [1996] and in other, less recent works. [For example, Raiffa, 1982; Young, 1991; and Hall, 1993.] Some involve an involved process of reducing differences between shares by continuous re-division - "trimming" - until a proportional and hence acceptable division amongst adversaries has been achieved. Others, such as the Adjusted Winner [AW] approach, involve a multi stage process in which those who do best out of an initial division of a number of goods in dispute hand over increments of their "win" until both sides view the distribution as of equal value and hence as fair. However, the overwhelming majority of these techniques are still based upon the assumption that what is actually "in conflict" only permits a solution that is based upon the splitting up of the goods in dispute among the adversaries and they basically seek to facilitate that division and to make it acceptable and durable by ensuring that the process of division is more open, understandable and agreeable; and that the outcome from this process is regarded as fair and as just as possible.

Leaving aside for the moment the issue of whether a particular process by which a compromise is reached is viewed as procedurally fair, a variety of criteria for determining whether a division of a good such as territory is fair [or "just" in some formulations] have been suggested, ranging from equality through equity, need, efficiency, prior entitlement through some previous relationship with the disputed good, and effort expended or sacrifices made in attempting to achieve it. Brams and Taylor [1996], with one eye clearly fixed on the issue of the likely unacceptability and hence instability of solutions of division based simply upon criteria such as equality or clarity, have suggested that fair divisions need to demonstrate the three characteristics of:

[1] Efficiency, the division in question offering the greatest possible benefit overall and to both parties [that is, there are no other possible divisions that could improve the outcome for one party without diminishing the benefit to the other];

[2] Proportionality, the division offering equal amounts of the good or - more accurately - equally valued amounts to all the parties involved in the compromise (3); and

[3] Freedom from envy, the division being one in which the members of each party involved feel that they have received the most valuable portion [according to their own evaluation] of the good and hence do not envy anyone else (4).

Brams and Taylor argue that an envy free division is most likely to lead to all parties involved in that division feeling that it is fair and hence to a situation in which all will, presumably for the foreseeable future, continue to support the settlement as the best possible solution and to adhere to its provisions. The assumption here seems to be that the key variable in determining whether a solution of division is, and continues to be, supportable is that all parties perceive that they did better than the others from the compromise, even though they failed to achieve everything they desired, or all they felt entitled to. I would agree that this factor may well contribute mightily to the durability of a solution of division, but whether the sense of having done better than an adversary from a compromise that still seems basically unsatisfactory will always outweigh the sense of having failed to gain all of what was historically and rightfully "ours", was originally stolen by "them", or was given to "us" by God, seems open to serious doubt. Even with the most subtle and sophisticated ways of arriving at and devising a "fair" compromise, one is still left with what is basically a solution of division and with the danger that such a solution merely postpones further efforts to attain the residue of the territory or other good in question, at least as long as the adversaries - or even one of them - continue to think of territory as being theoretically divisible, but actually integral and in very limited supply.

1.2. Territory: Title or Function ?

In contrast to the variety of sophisticated ways of arriving at solutions of division, there appear to be basically two alternative ways of thinking innovatively about territorial conflicts and starting to devise solutions of creation. Both offer ways of avoiding the trap of assuming too readily that a given conflict over territory is inevitably constant sum and thus is irresolvable, although it may be settle-able through some compromise, split the difference bargain.

The first of these approaches seeks to make a distinction between possession or title on the one hand, and use or function on the other. This distinction is recognised even in situations where human survival is linked to territory, as it is with peoples with simple levels of social organisation and technology. David Smith in his work on sharing and dividing geographical space makes this point implicitly when he argues that "...access to land or to the products thereof is a necessary condition of life...", but adds the caution that "...this may require exclusive access if the means of subsistence are to be assured..." [Smith 1990 p.1. emphasis added].

Smith's reference to access to territory and what it produces re-emphasises that, even if we start by assuming that only one person, community or government can own territory [and this may not necessarily be the case], this does not mean

that only one person, community or government can use that territory. Different people may wish to use the territory in different - or even similar - ways which are not necessarily mutually incompatible. A variety of functions can be performed on the same territory without necessarily interfering with, or detracting from, the performance of any of the others. On exactly the same piece of territory different people or organisations can:

- perform services [provide law and order and keep the peace, supply clean water, run a transport system];
- sell things [salesmen frequently talk about "my territory" when simply describing the area within which they market];
- collect and disburse revenues; [people can and frequently do pay taxes to entirely separate bodies]
- hold religious services [there are innumerable churches of widely differing denominations in many regions of many countries];
- conduct sporting events; and even
- be citizens of different countries.

The only goals involving territory that seem to be genuinely and wholly incompatible would be for different groups to wish to carry out any of these activities in precisely the same space at exactly the same time, which would, indeed, be physically impossible. Two individuals, organisations or governments wishing to do so would, indeed possess mutually exclusive goals.

As soon as one removes the temporal constraint, however, a whole series of possible uses for territory [and even any physical structures on the territory] become theoretically possible. Most activities can be "time shared" (5).

Put in slightly different terms, my argument is that even conflicts in which parties have apparently completely irreconcilable goals over territory may, at least in principle, be resolvable because the parties want the territory for different purposes or to carry out different activities. While these usages may still turn out to be mutually incompatible, equally they may not. Adversaries may both be able to do what they want on a given piece of territory without one activity preventing or obviating the other (6). Hence it becomes theoretically possible to share rather than to divide that particular piece of territory even if it proves practically difficult to do so.

In short, one can envisage many alternative ways of dealing with a conflict over territory, depending upon whether the parties' goals are:

- [1] To own or have title to the territory; or
- [2] To use the territory for some desirable purpose (7).

Smith [1990 p.3] neatly captures this difference by talking about parties that have a "claim over territory" as opposed merely to having a particular "claim on territory", the former involving an assertion of complete title to the territory in question and the latter merely a right to perform some limited activities thereon.

A goal mid-way between these two may be that of being in a position to control a piece of territory, in the sense of having the right to, or being able to determine which activities can take place on the territory and which cannot. In this case there can be different types or degrees of control, an important distinction being that between promotional and exclusionary control. The first type of control affords those "in charge" of the space or territory the right and ability to conduct certain activities on the territory in question - settle population, raise crops, base soldiers, mine guano, dig for gold, carry out nuclear tests. The second provides the right and ability to determine what may not take place - no hunting in parklands, no mining, no dumping of pollutants in streams and rivers - but more usually who may not have access to carry out these or other activities.

As David Smith makes clear, the exclusionary right to a piece of territory provides one group of people with the means to control access and to create partitions, which may be more or less porous, depending upon who is excluded and according to what criteria. Often, such controls are established to internalise particular benefits, as when richer areas or regions in modern societies incorporate themselves into new counties, cities or towns so that they can preserve their internal wealth; or to externalise costs as when newly incorporated towns cease having any fiscal responsibilities for supporting poor inner city neighbourhoods. (8)

On other occasions, exclusionary control is exercised to preserve a culture or to ensure its dominance, as in the case of Israel permitting only in-migration by Jews and not the return of Palestinian Arabs to pre-1967 Israel or to Jerusalem. Some cases of exclusionary control have involved the total exclusion of all "others" and all activities that are not acceptable to or in conformity with a particular culture, often as a way of preserving a culture. For example, Fay Gale [1990] argues that only complete spatial isolation in some parts of post-colonised Australia saved some of the Aboriginal people and their way of life from complete destruction.

These examples emphasise that, whatever the precise nature of the control, it can also vary in degree, in the sense of the number of functions that the controlling entity promotes or prevents and the categories of people it prevents or supports in carrying out these functions. [Pragmatically, control can also vary in the level of success achieved in limiting or

promoting each function.]

Between the alternative goals of owning title to territory or having access to it for some specific and limited purposes, it is generally the goals of possessing or acquiring ownership, title or authority for absolute, complete and unchallenged control that is regarded justifiably as the most intractable aspect of territorial conflicts, especially in conflicts involving nations and the governments that claim to represent them. The whole doctrine of sovereignty has been elaborated over the last 400 years to deal with such issues on a basis that no two authorities can be simultaneously "sovereign" over the same piece of territory - surely the paradigm case of a zero sum situation? Sovereignty [exclusive right of ownership for all purposes] of territory is usually regarded as an absolute, so that while territory itself can be divided, like cheese, sovereignty over it cannot. I will return to this argument below.

1.3. Territory; End or Means ?

The suggestion that apparently intractable territorial disputes may actually be about the use rather than the ownership of territory leads a second, more general suggestion about how disputes over territory might be made less intractable than they first appear. This second suggestion is that it could be fruitful to ask: "What interests, values and felt needs underlie the conflicting parties' goals of exclusive possession of the territory that is in dispute?"

It may be that exclusive possession of the territory is an end in itself for one or both disputing parties, but it is equally possible that the disputed territory fulfils some deeper interest for them - either it symbolises something, or provides something, or guarantees something, or prevents something undesirable happening. There is a wide range of possibilities, and as David Smith says "...Territoriality and its various expressions must be recognised as a means to some end, such as material survival, political control or xenophobia..." [Above cit. p.3]

Practically speaking, analysing any protracted, ostensibly zero sum conflict over territory might well start with an initial question; "What do these people want this territory for?"

Even at a superficial level, there are a wide variety of reasons for parties having the goal of obtaining or retaining a particular piece of territory. These might well include:

- [1] For symbolic reasons; "Our nation began here."
- [2] For reasons of recompense or restitution; "It was stolen from us 250 years ago."
- [3] For reasons of material advantage; "It contains large quantities of oil which they already have and we don't".
- [4] For security; "It extends our forward defences against our [potentially aggressive] neighbours by 200 miles".
- [5] For "rounding out" ethnic unification; "One and a half million of our bothers and sisters live on that territory".
- [6] For protection of religious, linguistic or cultural practices; "A Protestant state for a Protestant people".

A more sophisticated response might be constructed from an analysis of the functions carried out by the national, territorial state, a political unit that developed out of the dynastic states of 17th Century Europe and which is the dominant model of preferred political organisation that has come to cover the globe by the end of the 20th Century - in aspiration, if not in actual fact. As John Herz argued over forty years ago [Herz 19], one of the chief functions of the territorial state was always security, so that the state was a defence or protection unit, both in a military and an economic sense, sheltering its citizens from damaging outside attack and their economic activities from damaging outside competition. Other writers have emphasised that the territorial state also provided a mechanism for managing or settling internal conflicts through codes and courts, through political processes such as coups, elections or referenda, and through other, often informal dispute resolution processes. Still others have viewed the territorial state, especially in its 19th and 20th Century manifestation as the nation state, as fulfilling the function of maintaining national unity through its encouragement of internal communication through national languages [see Deutsch 1953] and its control of external flows of information, particularly that relating to its defence functions and - in some cases - its commercial, industrial and investment practices. One final function is that highlighted by Smith (1990) and others, when they talk about the territorial state's function of preserving a dominant culture on its territory and within its borders. This function returns the argument again to issues of exclusion and control, and the "cultural protectionist" reasons for denying "others" access to a particular piece of territory. Smith [above cit p.9] comments that "exclusion is part of a broader impulse to seek conformity and uniformity within specific spatial limits..." while Williams and Kofman explain the underlying reasons for the frequent drawing up of such cultural "cordons sanitaires":

"The sovereign control of territory by the state ensures that the dominant culture can circulate freely throughout the space...within its boundaries. It can divide and rule its territory so as to hinder or prevent attempts by subordinate cultures from developing a solid base ..." [1989 p.5]

Two questions can be raised about the argument that territory - or some political unit based on territory - can invariably and fruitfully be viewed as a means of providing defence, economic sustenance and commercial protection, familiar ways of managing conflict, a sense of exclusiveness and identity, or anything else.

The first is; Does the territorial state as constituted at the start of the 21st Century still provide the means of fulfilling these functions and aspirations ? Without going into this issue in any depth at all, many writers have begun to cast considerable doubt on whether territorial states as presently - if traditionally - constituted can hope to continue to carry out their traditional functions, if they ever did. The development of attack technology based on long range missiles and nuclear weapons - and even the advent of suitcase sized nuclear weapons and hand carried but lethal biological weapons - has completed the work begun by bomber aircraft in mid-20th century in undermining any meaningful defence function based on territory. Economic globalisation and the current refusal of governments even to attempt to control the unfettered effects of "the market" have removed or seriously reduced the territorial state's role of economic or commercial protection. The development of a global communications system through the radio, the computer and the net, and the increasing globalisation of culture, have begun to undermine the territorial state's function in promoting and protecting its culture on its territory. According to Karen Litfin and her colleagues, satellite technology is rapidly removing even the territorial state's ability to control any information about processes and resources within its own boundaries, so that what happens on the territory of any state in the first decade of the 21st Century is rapidly available to anyone interested who can pay commercial rates for the data. [Litfin 1995].

However interesting possible answers to the first question might be, it is the second which is, for our purposes, the more relevant; Is the territorial state still the best or the only means of fulfilling these functions ?

As I have indicated above, it seems clear that, for many functions, the answer might simply be in the negative, or at least might indicate that, while territorial states remain the most efficient or reliable or simple in fulfilling certain functions, they are certainly not the only means for so doing. Economic promotion and protection might be as well achieved through transnational economic units; successful conflict resolution attained by using locally relevant procedures, unknown and untried in other parts of an existing territorial state; culture preserved by literary, cultural and sporting unions covering adjacent regions of legally separate and "sovereign" states. The main point to be made at this stage of the argument is that, in theory at least, there are alternatives.

The one serious doubt about the argument that territory can and does represent a means to some end that might be otherwise attained is the clear human tendency to identify with and become thoroughly attached to particular pieces of territory - what Smith calls "...a sense of place, comparable with the deepest emotional ties and feelings..." which can provide "...a sense of belonging to and affiliation with something beyond self and family..." [above cit. p.2] In a way, certain territories become an extension of individuals and groups, a part of them themselves. Individuals identify with homes and villages, gangs with their turf, nations with the "homeland" or with territorial locations that have deep historical and sometimes almost mystical significance - Mount Ararat for Armenians, Jerusalem for Israelis and Jews, Mecca for Muslims, the oaks at Gernika for Basques, the Black Hills for the Lakotas. In cases like this it could reasonably be argued that the territory or site has an intrinsic worth in itself and that no alternatives could possibly substitute for the territory in question or fulfil the often symbolic functions attached to that prized territorial symbol.

Against this it can be argued that there may be a tendency to over-emphasise territory and territorial symbols as sources of human identity. I will return to this issue when discussing the nature and implications of ethnic identity for conflict resolution below, but here it is enough to make the point that most land is occupied for some specific purpose, and also to recall that "territoriality" and the whole conception of human relationship to territory is a social construct rather than something innate, writers like Robert Ardrey [1971] notwithstanding (9). How territory is regarded and used varies from culture to culture. In some, land is regarded as simply a conduit, as a means of movement; in others the idea of owning land - especially by a single individual - is inconceivable (10). In still others, land can be owned collectively, but others can have rights to perform certain limited forms of activity thereon. Not all societies are based on a philosophy of possessive individualism as regards territory - or anything else.

Thus, it might be true that the most difficult problems connected with conflicts over territory will arise in cases where a people's strong sense of identity is involved and in which the territory is perceived as a part of "them" and as an extension of themselves. This factor of identification of self and territory should never be underestimated. However, there might be many ways in which a people can express their identity with a particular territory, without denying its use totally to others (11). Again, I will return to this argument below.

The more general and still essential point is that the interests and values that underlie publicly enunciated goals of attaining [or retaining] a given piece of territory are often both complex and unobtrusive. The functions that territory can fulfill for individuals, communities and nations are many and varied. Both facts provide opportunities to explore [at the very least] whether goals other than mutually exclusive ownership of the territory in question might fulfill parties' underlying

interests equally well, and whether these alternative goals might be non-conflicting or even complementary.

1.4. The Falklands/Malvinas Example.

I can explain many of the above arguments and illustrate the possibilities by briefly examining the conflict between the Argentine government, the British government and the Falkland Islanders over the Falklands/Malvinas Islands in the South Atlantic, 200 miles off the coast of Argentina.

At first sight, this is a classic, inter-state conflict over territory, with both the British and the Argentine Government claiming sovereign authority over the Islands, which have a population of about 2,000 people of British descent and which were seized [for strategic reasons] by the British navy in 1830 and the representatives of Argentine sovereignty ejected. In more recent times, all parties have tacitly accepted that "sovereignty" over the Islands is the key issue in contention to the degree that, following an Argentine attempt to seize the Islands by force in 1982, the British Government has refused even to discuss "sovereignty over the Islands" with their Argentine counterparts - a position wholly supported by the Islanders, who are the party most directly involved in the conflict. This "no discussion" policy is somewhat at odds with the British stance during the period 1965-82, which saw protracted negotiations between the two governments over the legal ownership and future of the Islands.

This seems, at first sight, to be a clear case of an irresolvable, zero sum conflict. There is a strictly limited amount of territory in contention between two governments and sovereign authority is conceived as being indivisible. Either the Islands are British, or they are Argentine, or they are independent of both, or they can be divided between the two governments in some equitable proportions. [At one stage during the 1982 war somebody suggested a plan whereby the British should retain East Falklands while the Argentines obtained West Falklands].

Thus the conflict may be reduced [with the parties refraining from coercive behaviour in pursuit of their goals]; it may be avoided [with the parties tacitly agreeing not to raise the issue as part of their overall relationship - for the time being]; it may be settled [in that a negotiated compromise may be worked out and set in place - temporarily]. But it cannot be resolved, as the goals of the parties are mutually incompatible and logically inconsistent.

On the other hand, if one begins to investigate more deeply the underlying reasons for the parties possessing and pursuing their goal of sovereignty over the Islands, and ask what interests and values title to the Islands confer [or would confer] then a different and slightly less intractable picture emerges. In Argentine perceptions, the Islands represent the continuation of both an extra-continental threat and a European domination that has always irked and which they find wholly unacceptable in this present time. The "Falklands" in British hands symbolise a continued Argentine failure and dependence that is galling and remediable. [Whether the Islands in Falklander hands would be perceived in a similar fashion is an interesting question.] The whole question of the Islands is thus bound up in complicated ways with issues of Argentine identity and with issues of status, recognition or worth, and respect, which a continuing British "imperial" presence on the Islands diminishes and denies. Understanding such factors helps to understand the widespread otherwise baffling, Argentine commitment to the return of these barren and potentially burdensome pieces of territory.

More practically, the Islands also represent access to rich resources of fish and deep sea oil, but these will need international capital and expertise to develop, so that joint development is probably necessary and can bring more rapid advantages than national efforts. The Islands are hardly a necessary outlet for surplus Argentine population, given the apparent reluctance of Argentines to migrate to mainland Patagonia.

From the British and Islander points of view [which may not necessarily be the same] the crucial issue at one level is British sovereignty, and at another the wish not to be seen to be giving in to coercion or threats of violence. However, the retention of sovereignty is basically the means on ensuring the continuation of the Islanders' way of life [which has already changed markedly because of the 1982 war and the infusion of new wealth into the Islands] and of their right to continue to "be British".

Given these underlying interests, the underlying issues in conflict appear to be less concerned with sovereign authority over land and people and more with sovereign authority over land on the one hand, and over people on the other. People can continue to "be British" whatever their physical geographical location, so that - if this is their goal - then it becomes possible to envisage a variety of arrangements whereby the people continue to "be British" [whatever that means] and the territory "becomes Argentinian" [and this latter can, equally, mean a wide variety of practical, on the ground arrangements]. There is an interesting echo here of some of the recent thinking carried out with regard to the conflict in Northern Ireland, with its two traditions of Anglo-Irish unionism and Irish nationalism, and with the growing conviction there that it is possible for some people to think of themselves as Irish and others as British even though they inhabit the same piece of territory; and for some activities to be conducted on an all-Ireland basis, others on a Northern Ireland basis and still other on a British or Western Isles basis. Nation-hood, in other words, is being divorced from territoriality and

nationalism from its territorial basis.

Other interests and values are involved in the dilemma of the Falklands/Malvinas, of course. Whether the main issue is defined as retaining sovereign authority or maintaining a way of life, or as obtaining sovereign authority and restoring a sense of justice and territorial completion, security for any new arrangements [and for those involved in them] is likely to remain a difficult problem. However, the point I wish to make through this example is that, even in the case of this apparently rigidly zero-sum situation, some arrangements by which the parties' underlying interests, values and aspirations are fulfilled can be envisaged. In other words, a resolution is possible, even though it might, at the present time, be impractical, given present relations between the parties involved and their leaders.

If, therefore, resolutions can be developed by the strategy of analysing underlying interests and values in the case of disputes over territory, it seems likely that similar strategies might be productive with other types of intractable conflicts.

1.4. Sovereignty as a Divisible Good.

At several points in the argument so far the concept of "sovereignty" has been mentioned in connection with the intractability of certain types of conflict, especially those involving differing claims to territory such as the one over the Falklands/Malvinas Islands discussed in the previous section of the paper. In this, as in many other conflicts - Chechnya, Moldova/ TransDniestria, Gibraltar, Northern Cyprus, Ngorno Karabagh - the issue in conflict is presented as one of "sovereignty" over territory and the intractability and resistance of the conflict to any "win-win" resolution attributed to the "fact" that sovereignty is, by its nature, absolute and indivisible.

This is, of course, the conventional view of sovereignty inherited from the 17th Century political ideas of thinkers like Jean Bodin and Thomas Hobbes and elaborated into a fundamental doctrine of international law in the following century by jurists such as Juarez, Vittoria and Grotius. It is this all-or-nothing view of sovereignty which has underpinned the search by leaders of such territorially based political entities as Croatia, Macedonia, Georgia, Tibet, Abkhazia, Kurdistan, Slovakia, Estonia, Latvia, Transdniestria, Eritrea and many more, for recognition as independent and, above all, "sovereign" states. It is this indivisible view of sovereignty - one either has it or one does not - that has led existing sovereign states of the 1990's and 2000's, such as the Russian Federation, the Yugoslav Federal Republic, Moldova, Spain or Azerbaijan to deny that Chechnya, North Ossetia, Karelia, Kosovo, Trasndniestria, the Basque County or Ngorno Karabagh are or can ever be "sovereign". This conception of "sovereignty", defined as the complete and unfettered right to control all and every aspect of life within a recognised territorial area, through such a definition ensures that conflicts ostensibly over who is sovereign over a given area can only permit solutions of division of that territory [or solutions of substitution if compensation for loss of sovereignty is ever deemed possible] and, almost by definition, makes the central goals of adversaries in sovereignty conflicts the achievement of all or as much of the divisible territory as possible.

However, in recent years many scholars have begun to point out that, however familiar, stable and accepted, the idea of sovereignty remains just that - an idea, a conception or a "social construct" [See Bierstaker & Weber, 1996]. Hence, its meaning can change over time, or be deliberately reviewed and re-interpreted in the light of changes in the referent world or in thinking about the referent world. In other words, it is the case that one can conceptualise sovereignty over [or ownership of] territory itself differently and in non-absolute terms - as a situation in which there are gradations of rights, powers or exclusions over a piece of territory, ranging from the right of an individual, a people or a government to do whatever they like with or on a particular piece of land, to a situation where they possess only a right to carry out a limited range of activities.

As I have argued elsewhere [Mitchell 1989] if both ownership and control can be thought of as variable rather than absolute, then sovereignty can be envisaged as divisible, with one body having authority in a given territory over certain aspects of life or wealth, and other bodies over other aspects (12). It can be regarded as divisible in many other ways, as when sub-national units begin to establish rights to take over functions and actions that - traditionally and within a framework of a government having absolute authority and control - have been the sole purview of a central and sovereign authority. When regional governments and NGO's begin to by-pass central governments and conduct their own external relations with other central governments, it may be helpful to accept Duchacek and his colleague's [1988] conception of "perforated sovereignty", but this seems basically another way of indicating that it is possible to regard sovereignty as an inherently divisible good, rather than as something one possesses or does not possess.

Whatever concepts or labels one uses to describe it, it seems clear that the referent world of the late 20th Century is becoming more and more "perforated", as aspects of state sovereignty become shared among sub-national, transnational and international entities. If it seems doubtful whether any state was ever truly and completely "sovereign" in the older, absolutist sense, and it certainly now clear that many states are increasingly handing over authority, autonomy and control of a range of previously exclusive activities to supra-national and transnational bodies. Transnational entities such as Alpe Adria are conducting their own calibrated economic and investment policies. Regions such as Northern Ireland are

establishing trade and development missions in Brussels and Strasbourg. The State of Illinois has a trade office in Tokyo and the Republic of Tatarstan currently maintains 8 permanent representative offices in countries outside the Russian Federation of which it remains part, even while claiming to be a "sovereign" republic therein. [Slocum 1999 pp.60-1]. In the real world of early 21st Century politics, the lines between "autonomy" "independence" and "sovereignty" are being blurred, as are those between "intra-national", "foreign" and "international".

Both the intellectual and the empirical changes in the accepted nature of sovereignty have clear implications for the issue of conflict resolution in conflicts about sovereignty over territory. A divisible conception of sovereignty enables questions to be asked about "sovereign over what activities ?" or "sovereign over whom and for what purposes ?", rather than confining the search for solutions to the question of how best to carry out a division of the territory, rather like the classical cutting of a cake, with each piece going to one of the adversaries complete, absolute and un-trammelled. As with questions about the use of territory and the functions that adversaries might want to perform in the region, country or city in dispute, questions about the exercise of a divisible or shared sovereignty permit creative questioning and at least the hope of some answers that permit a resolution of even the most intractable conflict – a resolution that satisfy underlying interests and values and is durable, perhaps because it is, among other things, envy free. I now turn to the question of whether such an outcome might not also possible in the other type of intractable conflict that forms the second focus of this Chapter.

2. Intractable Conflicts and Issues of Ethnicity.

The second major type of intractable conflict that I wish to examine is that which falls broadly under the heading of "ethnic conflict", largely because such conflicts are usually viewed as being essentially zero-sum in their nature, but also because there is a contemporary consensus that this type of conflict will be prevalent and protracted from the post Cold War era on into the 21st Century. In the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, in Africa, in South West Asia and elsewhere on that continent, even in the apparently unified societies of Western Europe, ethnic conflicts and divisions give rise to violence and destructions and to questions about how Bosnias, Rwandas, Punjabs, and Ethiopias might even be ameliorated, let alone resolved.

Moreover, in an empirical sense there seems to be a very close connection between conflicts of ethnicity and conflicts of territory (13), in that it often seems to be the case that what are commonly called "ethnic" conflicts appear to take place between ethnic groups over ownership or control of territory, thus making them wholly intractable. As Stephen Ryan remarks in his study of the international implications of ethnic conflict, "...to the extent that ethnic conflicts are conflicts over control of territory, they are zero-sum games..." (Ryan 1990 p.xvii) That being the case, we seem to confront a conflict type that poses a major challenge to those who argue for the inherent "resolvability" of all conflicts.

2.1. The Nature of "Ethnic" Conflicts.

And yet, is this the case ? Or can some arguments already made above apply equally to conflicts of ethnicity ? Before attempting to answer these questions, I think it is important to be clear about what is meant by "an ethnic conflict", and what essential characteristics qualify particular cases of goal incompatibility between parties for inclusion in that category. There often seems to be an assumption in the very diverse literature on ethnicity and ethnic conflict that these conflicts have uniquely defining characteristics as regards the parties, the issues and the behaviours involved, but is this really so ? What distinguishes an "ethnic" conflict from other types of conflict, apart from the unarguable fact that they are more intractable than most (14) ?

One simple approach to the question of what makes a conflict an "ethnic conflict" is to fall back on straightforward distinctions, recalling a basic definition that a conflict is "a situation where parties possess incompatible goals". From this basis, the simplest approach might be to distinguish between:

- [1] Conflicts that are between ethnic groups or communities - that is, the parties are ethnically based; and
- [2] Conflicts that are also about ethnicity - its existence, its expression, its implications.

There are two important implications of such a starting point. One is the argument always made by writers on ethnicity, but never widely recalled, that the mere existence of ethnic differences is not in itself the same as or enough to bring about a situation of ethnic conflict. For ethnic communities to be "in conflict" it is not enough that they are simply different from one another [no matter how wide the differences in appearance, language, religion, custom or culture], nor that they feel suspicion or mistrust towards each another; there must also be clear and understood goal incompatibilities.

Rupesinghe puts this point most elegantly when he says "...mere existence of ethnicity is certainly no precondition for conflicts: it would be absurd to assume that there will be conflict merely because ethnic groups as such exist..." (1987

p.531)

The second implication is that when such goal incompatibilities do come into existence, they may be over issues which arise directly from ethnic differences but, equally, they may not. Goal incompatibilities could arise over issues that are not, strictly speaking, inherently ethnic - jobs, political power, educational opportunities, church-state relations, or social status. All of these may be based on class or caste. Empirically, it often appears that non-ethnic issues are likely to become entangled with the existence of different ethnic groups in a country, thus increasing the intractability of a conflict, but analytically it is important to make a distinction between conflicting goals that arise from an inherent ethnicity and those which equally could arise in non-ethnic situations, and which have become entangled with ethnic divisions.

2.2. Ethnic Issues in Conflict; Security and Identity.

The next question to be addressed is what types of issue arise from "inherently ethnic" goals. What types of issue arise because and only because a society is characterised by ethnic divisions ? One approach suggested, among others, by Burton (1991) is that conflicts between ethnic groups can take place about three basic types of issue, which in any protracted conflict usually inter-act and become inextricably entangled to increase that conflict's intractability:

[1] Issues of ethnic access to resources, such as wealth, political influence, status, education, jobs etc.

[2] Issues of ethnic identity, and how this can be expressed to the satisfaction of one group without infringing on its expression by another group.

[3] Issues of ethnic security, and how this can be achieved without threatening or diminishing the security of other ethnic groups.

In line with the point made earlier, the first issue type is not one solely found to involve ethnic groups, and much social conflict based on class, region, gender, or age arises from competition for material and other socio-economic goods. However, the history of many protracted ethnic conflicts indicates that often the initial trigger events for cycles of intense ethnic conflict arise over competition for jobs, for educational opportunities, or access to welfare provisions. For example, many conflicts ostensibly over "official" languages in multi-ethnic countries are, at least in part, over what the adoption of one official language will mean about closing access to high status government jobs for speakers of non-official language.

Once such issues arise, however, they give rise to other issues and these frequently concern matters of ethnic identity and, ultimately, security. Language conflicts are partly about being advantaged and disadvantaged in job markets or in access to higher education or in abilities to be socially mobile; but they are also partly about ethnic groups having their identities implicitly recognised or dismissed, depending upon whether theirs is an official language or not.

Ultimately, such conflicts also come to be seen as part of a general threat to the security and survival of an ethnic way of life, or the ethnic community itself, and the issues in the conflict come to be interpreted in an existential sense. One party's goal may become that of survival, and doing anything it can to ensure this.

2.3. Ethnic Conflicts and the Survival Goal.

Both logically and theoretically, existential conflicts are clearly zero-sum in nature, and hence irresolvable. If one party's goal is the destruction of another, and the other's its own survival, then opportunities for a creative solution are limited, to say the least. If one party's goal is the conversion of the other so that they become indistinguishable from the first, then a mutually satisfactory resolution of that conflict seems a remote possibility, unless the assimilation occurs voluntarily.

Moreover, the dynamics of protracted ethnic conflicts [even when the latter start over issues of equal opportunity, access to political influence, or acceptance of religious freedom] frequently appear to drive the parties into a frame of mind in which these basic goals of eradication versus survival come to replace the original pragmatic issues at the core of the conflict. Once issues of ethnic "survival" and threats to survival become part of any relationship between different ethnic groups in a country, they tend to permeate that relationship, to ensure that future conflicts rapidly come to concern that issue, and the make any lasting solution of otherwise resolvable conflicts almost impossible to achieve.

However, I did preface the above argument with a conditional "if", and while it is historically unarguable that many ethnic conflicts come to be perceived by those involved as being about their security and very survival (15), this may be the result of the dynamics of the conflict. In many protracted conflicts, the behaviour of the adversary usually becomes an issue in and of itself, and original issues become "masked" by others that arise both tactically and strategically during the course of the conflict.

Reinforcing this is the tendency of leaders of ethnic groups in conflicts over dominance or redistribution, or even over the survival of a particular "way of life", to portray such conflicts as being about physical destruction or survival of their

people. Alternatively, many protracted conflicts between ethnic groups and communities come to be defined as being about ethnic dominance within a particular piece of territory, so that the only possible "solution" becomes that of ensuring ethnic survival and identity through that dominance [and usually dominance within the largest piece of territory that negotiating skill or political power can obtain]. The conflict thus becomes one that revolves around the conflicting goals of expulsion of a particular people from a given territory, or their maintenance therein; or the relative positions of political, economic and social dominance within a contested area.

Conflicts that involve determined and committed ethnic communities clashing over such goals and becoming involved in dynamic processes that involve large scale violence and destruction (16) thus seem inevitably to become intractably zero-sum, and hence to be irresolvable, even theoretically.

2.4. Underlying Interests of Ethnic Parties in Conflict.

A counter argument to this conclusion, however, is my previous point about goals in conflict often representing means to achieve underlying values and interests, and the question of whether these might be the only available means, even for adversarial ethnic communities in multi-ethnic countries. Frequently, the publicly incompatible goals of ethnic communities in conflict involve attaining or maintaining a dominant position within a given territory, the expulsion of the other from that territory, the separation of that territory from an existing country and the achievement of "independence" and "self-determination", ultimately taking the form of a recognised, separate state.

However, it may be that the goals of achieving or maintaining political dominance, or of achieving a national home or an independent state are ways of fulfilling underlying interests of the conflicting ethnic communities, which involve the security of those communities and the expression of their ethnic identity [their "way of life"]. The attainment of a separate, ethnic state or province - free from the presence of others not members of "the volk" - is usually seen as the best, or sometimes the only method of attaining safety, security and longevity for the community and its values, and as the best way in which its "way of life" can continue, - or even as the supreme symbol of that way of life. But if the achievement of the goals of a separate and ethnically homogenous state [or even province] is currently seen to be the best means of fulfilling key interests of security and identity, one can legitimately ask whether there are - theoretically at least - other ways in which such interests might be fulfilled, apart from separation, independence, ethnic cleansing and the like. Are there no other ways in which ethnic identity can be expressed and maintained? Must the only means be a separate state on the piece of territory often exclusively sought by another ethnic community for similar purposes of expressing and symbolising its identity? Is exclusive possession of, and control over a piece of "our" territory the only way in which threats to a community's security [or survival] can be lessened or removed? Or might there be a variety of different ways in which interests involving an ethnicity's security might be safeguarded and its sense of identity expressed and acknowledged in a satisfactory manner?

It may be that, ultimately, the answer to such questions will be; "No - this is the only way!". It is an answer that becomes more and more likely the longer and more violent the conflict, the greater the loss and damage suffered by the adversaries, and the more intense and deep-rooted the hostility and mistrust that develops between and within the parties. But there is no logical reason why the answer should be in the negative. There are examples of ethnic conflicts involving goals of territorial control and ownership that have been resolved in ways that fulfill the interests of the parties by other means through attaining other goals. The ending of the intense conflict between Swedish inhabitants and the Finnish Government over the Aland Islands after the First World War is one example of such a resolution. The solution found to the South Tyrol conflict following the Second World War is another.

To say that such resolutions have been devised is to say that they are possible, nor to say that they are likely or that devising them is easy. The very fact that parties in conflict, ethnic and non-ethnic, are trapped in the conventional worldview that insists that conflicts are irresolvable and - at best - can only be bargained to a compromise involving much sacrifice is, in itself, a major barrier. The assumption is a major obstacle even to contemplating the possibility of a win-win solution, let alone to starting the hard intellectual and practical task of working with the conflicting parties to explore underlying interests and search for mutually acceptable solutions that remove or undermine mutually incompatible goals or positions.

However, difficulties do not add up to impossibility, and this possibility of a resolution needs to be kept at the back of one's mind even during stages of conflicts when only victory or defeat through continued mutual destruction seem real alternatives. At such times, one needs to recall the first Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, David Lilienthal's comment in 1946 as he wrestled with the problems of the international control of atomic energy: "...We keep on saying 'We have no other course'. What we should be saying is, 'We are not bright enough to see any other course'..." The remainder of this Handbook seeks to set out some methods and techniques through which parties in conflict might be

enabled to think about alternative means of achieving their interests and goals, about neglected opportunities for a different relationship with their adversary, and about the possibilities of achieving a practical “win-win” resolution through innovation and creativity.

ENDNOTES

(1) Oddly, one of the most neglected aspects in the discussion of the dilemmas of fair division concerns the fair sharing of "bads". Some work has been carried out on the fair sharing of "chores", where parties' objectives revolve around attempting to obtain the least possible for themselves [Brams & Taylor 1996 pp. 49-50], but a similar approach could presumably be taken to any problem involving the fair sharing out of the costs of any enterprise.

(2) Brams and Taylor [1996 p.10] point out that this principle is still invoked as a means of resolving complex problems involving, for example, maritime resources. The 1992 Convention on the Law of the Sea stipulates that, whenever a developed country wishes to mine a portion of the seabed, its government must propose a division of the portion into two tracts. An international mining company representing the interests of developing countries through the International Seabed Authority [and funded by the developed countries] then chooses the tract it prefers. The developed country obtains the other tract for its own exploitation. Through this process of divide and choose some parts of the seabed are reserved for developing countries which otherwise could no participate at all in the benefits from sea bed mining.

(3) Brams and Taylor suggest an alternative desirable quality to "proportionality" in their recent work [1996 pp.71-2]. This is "equitability", which they define as the condition in which adversaries receive an allocation of the goods in dispute, and values this in such a way that they are indifferent between retaining this allocation and being awarded the exact fractional allocation [say 1/3 of the value if three parties are involved, 1/4 if four] that would arise from a simple proportionate division.

(4) In the case of multi-party conflicts, Brams and Taylor [1996 pp.82-3] note the difficulty in finding a means that always leads to the devising of a solution that fulfils all three criteria of efficiency, equitability and freedom from envy. They suggest that, in real world conflicts, loss of "efficiency" [a solution that could not, even theoretically, be bettered] might be regarded as much less important if equitability is achieved, together with lack of envy among all the parties.

(5) This is not to argue that such "time sharing" is necessarily simple, costless, or psychologically easy. It may not even be politically possible, at a given point of time. However, it is to argue that starting from such a conceptual position does provide an opportunity to envisage alternative arrangements from those whereby exclusive rights and abilities to do whatever one wants with and on the whole of a piece of territory in dispute, or some share thereof, are gained by adversaries in conflict. Temporal sharing may have its attractions after two communities or nations have been involved in a protracted, violent and costly conflict over "whose territory" a particular area will remain - or become.

(6) Logically, for example, it is physically possible for Jerusalem to be both the capital city of Israel and the capital city of a Palestinian state - at least in the sense that the functions of both capitals could be carried out within the same city, with difficulty, but without necessarily interfering with the successful running of the two sets of government business. Given an effective, city wide traffic control system, ceremonial state "occasions" could even be carried out with efficiency and panache.

For an interesting discussion of the problem of Jerusalem and the general issue of "indivisible goods" in conflict situations see Cecilia Albin's analysis. [Albin 1991]

(7) Naturally, the impact of the usage in question will make a difference to parties' willingness to share territory, depending upon whether a particular use [a] leaves the territory used unchanged; [b] changes the nature of the territory temporarily but the user commits to restoring it thereafter to its original condition or [c] changes its nature permanently. Australian Aborigines' differing attitudes towards mining companies on the one hand [they just make a big hole in the ground and then go away] and tourists on the other [like cattle, they destroy whole areas of territory and do not respect the environment] illustrate this "respect v harm" factor. [See Gale 1990 p.226]

(8) The early secession of Slovenia from the Yugoslav Federation was not unconnected with the fact that Slovenia was the richest of the constituent republics in the Federation and its people felt that they had been contributing too much to the Federation and to the poorer republics without getting much in return. Secession clearly seemed one means of preserving Slovenian GDP and its people's standard of living. This might be a good example of what one cynic characterised as "Self determination for Beverly Hills !"

(9) The conceptual and practical link between territory and nation is not one with a long history, as David Smith reminds us by arguing that "...it is easy to overlook the relatively recent origin of the idea of congruence between a people with shared characteristics and the spatial expression of their political organisation..." [Smith above cit p.5] - an argument which clearly implies that forms of political organisation other than spatial are conceivable.

(10) Faye Gale reports a frequent comment by older Australian Aborigines as "...you whitefellows say you own the land; we blackfellows know the land owns us..." [Gale 1990 p.230]

(11) Although the processes involved in such outcomes are not necessarily to be commended, the settlements of conflicts over territory between some Aboriginal peoples and state governments in Australia might be viewed as examples of solutions of creation. In two cases, title to lands in the Northern Territories was restored to Aboriginal peoples who had sought to re-establish ownership and in both cases the land was then leased back to the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service so that the regions could be run as national parks, local people being consulted about the parks' development. In addition, in the Kakadu National Park, mining was permitted but royalties were to be paid to local peoples. [Gayle above cit. pp.225-6]

(12) Something of the sort appears to have been happening in practical [let alone theoretical] terms in the European Community since 1956. If it can happen there, then the same principles of limiting and distributing sovereignty might be applicable to other disputes over territory - Ngorno Karabagh, former Yugoslavia, Sri Lanka, the Spanish [and French] Basque country, the Falklands/ Malvinas Islands.

(13) It should be noted that "territorial conflicts" are defined by the goods or issues in dispute, while "ethnic conflicts" are defined by the kind of parties involved in the adversarial relationship. This implies that it is possible to have ethnic conflicts that are not about territory, and territorial conflicts that do not involve ethnic groups as conflicting parties.

(14) It often seems to be the case that ethnic conflicts are more intense than others, in the sense that they give rise to greater violence and more extreme feelings of fear, hatred and mistrust. But, in fact, ethnic conflicts do not seem to be unique, at least in their behavioural manifestations. The American civil war was hardly an ethnic conflict, yet it was not carried out at a low level of violence. Neither the First nor the Second World Wars were clearly ethnic conflicts. Nor were the Korean War or the two Vietnam Wars. Destructiveness does not seem to be a unique characteristic of ethnic conflicts.

(15) And with some justification, given the nature of behaviour in many ethnic conflicts. One would be hard put to argue with a Tutsi that the ethnic conflict in Rwanda was NOT about survival, or with a Dinka that the Sudanese civil war was about the political relationship between northerners and southerners in that country, rather than the purposeful extermination of the peoples of the south.

(16) Such violent inter-action will only seem to confirm the perception that the basic issues are over threats to a community and its way of life and - probably - over its physical survival. Reactions to such perceptions will lead to behaviour that reinforces similar perception within the other ethnic community. There are strong elements of self-fulfilling prophecies in such relationships.

CHAPTER 4.

THE LOGIC OF A COLLABORATIVE ANALYTICAL APPROACH.

The first three Chapters of this Handbook have tried to deal theoretically and conceptually with the arguments for and against the idea that conflicts are, at least in principle, resolvable and that it is possible to find solutions to even the most protracted and intractable social conflict, however violent. We should note here that, while the violence itself is a major problem, it is not the central problem for a conflict resolution process, no matter how appalling and widespread it might be, and often is. The crucial problem for finding a long term resolution is the goal incompatibility that gives rise to the violence in the first place – or, actually, in the fourth or fifth place, because protracted conflicts usually pass through other stages involving protest, confrontation, hostility and coercion before reaching the point of violence between adversaries.

To talk of “finding a durable solution” seems to imply that solutions lie around the place like stones, waiting to be picked up, and this can hardly be the case given the prevalence of apparently insoluble conflicts in our world. Obviously, there must be some practical tactics or techniques, based upon sound principles of resolution as a process, that can be used to find, devise or create durable and acceptable solutions to the apparently unsolvable. The remainder of the Handbook therefore discusses and demonstrates some of these conflict resolution processes and the practical, step by step techniques that could be used to assist parties in protracted and violent conflicts jointly to create their own resolutions for their own conflict.

The Handbook certainly does not exhaust the possibilities for creating solutions, although I would argue that it does exemplify most of the principles that underlie all problem solving approaches to conflict resolution. However, having presented some ideas about *why* we should think it is possible to develop creative solutions, it does provide some ideas about *how* this might be done, on a day to day, stage to stage basis, using a problem solving logic.

1. Adopting a Problem Solving Mindset.

Paradoxically, the first practical step in initiating any kind of conflict resolution process is an intellectual one. It is necessary to start by thinking of a protracted, violent conflict as a *problem*. This is not a trivial step, though at first sight it seems to be. The point is that it is rare for anybody – adversaries or outsiders - to think of the conflict as a problem. Instead, the normal tendency is to focus on a particular country that commits 'an act of untoward aggression'; on the actions of a terrorist group; on a boundary that is in hot dispute; on an economic arrangement that is causing injustice and unrest. The normal focus is on salient and usually obvious aspects of the overall problem - the violent behaviour involved, the nature of the parties that participate or the incompatible objectives sought. One of these is the thing that appears to be causing all the trouble, so this is the thing that must be dealt with.

Once this customary way of thinking about conflict is accepted, we are caught in a trap of fatalism. Mentally, we accept the inevitability of the violence, the intransigence of the parties and the intractability of the issues. We think of coercion leading to violence as an unwelcome 'fact of life', something that happens regularly from time to time within societies - and frequently in international society. The system, after all, provides for it, and there are methods to deal with it - normally 'in kind', through deterrence, counter-coercion, counter violence. Such methods are, of course, unwelcome to those who have to apply them, at every level, from the top decision-makers down through civil servants, soldiers, policemen, social workers, ordinary citizens. Unpleasant the methods may be, but intractable issues, 'uncivilized' and evil people, irresolvable conflicts make them necessary.

However, it might be that by concentrating our efforts upon the violent conflict as a *whole*, then it may be possible to solve it without resorting to methods that are distasteful in themselves and can easily make the situation worse. If the conflict itself is the problem to be solved, then the rest of a problem-solving logic follows. Parties create the problem by their pursuit of goals to fulfil underlying interests. When these goals happen to clash with the goals of other parties, there is an issue in conflict. Parties respond by pushing harder to reach their goals, so coercion and then violent behaviour may occur. The problem comes into existence.

Note, therefore, that objectives and actions by parties create the problem; not fate, not history, not some invisible, mysterious and immutable characteristic of society, economy or polity. The parties do it. And they do it at all social levels; individual, small group, large group, community, organization, nation state. In principle, if the parties *make* the problem, then they can unmake it. This may not be easy for a thousand reasons, including the fact that every action has consequences and conflict situations tend to become so

dynamic and complicated that hardly anyone can understand what is happening. But the significant point is that it is the parties themselves and no one else, that can finally *unmake* the problem.

2. Avoiding Traditional Third Party Dilemmas.

The second step is a rather negative one, but it involves understanding some of the shortcomings of traditional, 'third party' approaches to settling protracted conflicts and making sure that problem solving techniques avoid them. Unfortunately, conventional attempts by a third party to *unmake* the problem frequently compound it, at least initially. Conventional outside 'intervention' usually consists of action in pursuit of an immediate and admittedly worthy goal; stopping the violence. Regretably, this goal does not coincide with the goals of the existing parties, unless they are thoroughly exhausted and looking for a (perhaps temporary) respite. They already have their own goals, which (apparently) cannot be satisfied save at the expense of each other. So the intervening party adds a third goal, at least, which clashes and therefore forms another issue.

If the intervening party applies sufficient 'leverage' or power (in the form of either coercion or reward) then it may *subdue* or suppress the conflicting behaviour of the original parties, thus ending the violence. It appears that a central and salient *part* of the problem has been solved and, indeed, it has, in the sense that the violence has now ceased. In the jargon of conflict theory, this is one form of *settlement* of a conflict, as distinct from a *resolution*. Perhaps unfortunately, this kind of outcome is both unlikely to achieve stability in the long run.

If the people of the world could safely place their trust in the settlement of violent conflicts by external intervention in this way, then there might be no need to invent any other method. But faith cannot be placed in it, for three compelling reasons.

First, it tends to be difficult, expensive and dangerous. This is because the goals of the intervening party often clash with those of the original adversaries. So they are likely to fight back separately (or even in temporary combination). Sometimes they fight back so long and so hard that the intervening party has to withdraw in exhaustion and defeat. The experience of the Indian 'peacekeeping' forces in Sri Lanka from 1988 to 1990 is an example of such a failure. The failures in Bosnia up to 1995, the frustrated UN efforts in Somalia, the intervention of the Economic Commission of West African States (ECOWAS) in Liberia during the early 1990's, and the current exercise in regime change and democracy building in Iraq provide other examples.

Second, a genuinely disinterested act of uninvited intervention by a third party is rarer than one might think. In practice, an intervention usually favours the goal of one or other of the original parties. In that situation, what is called a *settlement* when violent conflict has ceased is, in fact, a disguised victory (although, sometimes, only a partial victory) for one party - based upon the assistance of its external patron. Apart from the question of whether faith can be placed in the stability or longevity of such a *settlement*, another disadvantage of this approach is that for every act of intervention on behalf of one adversary, there is likely to be a countervailing act of intervention. Typically, it comes from another party, a *fourth* party to the conflict, and its purpose is to help the other adversary. When this happens, relative power in the conflict situation is likely to return to an approximate balance, which means that the violence is likely to get worse. So the problem of violent conflict is not *un-made* by coercive intervention, it is *re-made*. Consider, in this regard, mainland Greek and Turkish intervention on the island of Cyprus.

Third, intervention leading to a *settlement* should be recognized as a victory for the goal of the intervening party but a defeat for the goals of both the original conflicting parties. The violence ends, but the goals of the original adversaries are usually still there, still at issue. The underlying interests are still unmet. This means that although the problem of conflict is no longer *manifest*, it remains *latent*. Take away the power of the intervening party (the peacekeeping force, the economic aid, the outside guarantees or whatever) and the goals and interests of the conflicting parties are likely to be immediately re-asserted. The problem of violent conflict reappears even years later, as it has in the former Yugoslavia, in Armenia and Azerbaijan, and in other parts of the former USSR following *perestroika*, *glasnost* and the break-up of the Soviet Union.

3. A Problem Solving Alternative.

An alternative, problem solving approach has to take these difficulties into account. It has to work within the principles that, if conflict and resultant violence are problems created by the parties themselves and can be stopped finally and for good only by the parties, then it follows that *coercive* attempts to stop the conflict by external parties cannot be relied upon.

Given this logic, the only question is whether parties should be left to solve their own problems or whether attention should be paid to providing them with assistance of a *noncoercive* kind., and what form this should take.

If this were an ideal world, it would undoubtedly be best to leave the parties to themselves. Standards of education and rationality would be high in this ideal world and facilities would exist to which they could turn for assistance if, in their own judgement, they needed to. But our world, even with some 'New World Order', is far from ideal, and the fact is that parties in violent conflict are not only subjected to heavy, constant, external pressure of a forcible kind. They are also faced with a complete absence of disinterested, professional, non-coercive assistance.

Problem-solving approaches represent one attempt to provide such assistance. Any problem-solving initiative starts, continues and concludes with some third party devoting its attention to the interests of *all* the parties in a given dispute, as determined by those parties themselves. It involves the principle of putting adversaries in a situation where they can explore the possibilities for new options leading to a 'win-win', or variable sum solution to what can be recognized as a mutual problem. A major task for the third party is not to use leverage nor to search for a bargained compromise, but the provision of a safe venue in which productive discussions might take place, maximizing the chances of a genuine exchange of ideas, of free-ranging analysis and of the noncommitting exploration of options. This is not an easy task.

4. The Need for Self Examination.

Moreover, being a *disinterested* and *professional* third party presents problems, even when those acting in the role have no direct interest in the fortunes of the adversaries or the outcome of the conflict under analysis. Using a collaborative and analytical problem-solving approach does not automatically insulate those practising it from the problems of 'neutrality' or 'impartiality' familiar to those using any form of third-party intervention (conciliation, mediation, good offices), although the approach's underlying principles do help to prevent personal predispositions interfering with the conduct of an exercise.

As Nikita Khrushchev once said, 'There are no neutral men', and even the most disinterested professional is by no means value free, as our discussion of third party 'peacekeepers' indicated.

At the start of any problem-solving exercise, therefore (as with other forms of intermediary work), it is always wise for potential interveners to examine their own motives for undertaking the proposed initiative and becoming 'third parties'; to consider the values that might affect their handling of the process; and to review their assumptions (both theoretical and practical) about the nature of the conflict and about the third-party role in which they are about to become involved. 'Being a professional' involves, as a first step, making oneself aware of one's own goals and values in undertaking any problem-solving exercise.

SEE EXERCISE 4.1 at the end of this Chapter.

5. Principles of Problem Solving.

At the end of Chapter 1, I laid out some conflict resolution principles which seemed to me to be a basis for approaching a protracted conflict through problem solving. This, I argued, could be a means for finding or creating an acceptable and durable solution. These seven basic principles involved putting key members of the parties in conflict [that is, those who *made* the conflict and therefore can *unmake* it] in a setting where they:

1. Can be made aware of the possibility of a positive sum solution for their conflict.
2. Can become aware that the problem is not solely of their adversary's making.
3. Can become convinced that there is a potential negotiating partner on the other side.
4. Can explore each other's underlying interests, aims and values.
5. Can explore the likely future costs of continuing present policies.
6. Can jointly explore alternative means of achieving their basic interests.
7. Can examine obstacles to achieving their basic interests through alternative means.

Practically speaking, this means that, if a complete problem solving "service" is envisioned to help parties to a protracted, violent conflict work their way towards a resolution, the procedure involves the following:

- (1) Arrangements should be made and agreed whereby key representatives of the parties in dispute meet in a secure and non-threatening environment, in the presence of a panel of 'facilitators' who facilitate the exchange and provide useful ideas, process and alternatives;
- (2) The panel of facilitators should be appropriately competent, knowledgeable and properly qualified in relevant disciplines and practical experience;
- (3) The initial objective of the first and subsequent meetings should be to analyse the conflict in all aspects that the party representatives deem relevant, and to examine options for moving the conflict towards an acceptable solution.

In a perfectly successful meeting (workshop) or series of meetings, the parties would emerge with a resolution of the conflict, in the sense of an outcome that satisfies their underlying interests and their goals. In a wholly unsuccessful workshop, the parties would leave having lost nothing but the time of their representatives. In most workshops or workshop series, participants emerge with new insights and options; with ideas about alternative means of achieving both sets of goals (rather than only one side's); with a new sense of the probable costs of continuing the coercive strategies employed up to that point; and with some procedures established for moving towards a solution and some principles conceived on which that solution might be based.

Ideally, participation in a workshop or a problem-solving exercise should involve neither issues of formal recognition nor processes of formal negotiation. It should be an academic analysis of situations, processes and possibilities, nothing more. The approach is modest but potentially highly effective. In our experience, there is no better way of dealing with the problem of violent conflict which is deep-rooted and, hence, protracted.

The following chapters describe some of the steps needed [including typical obstacles to be overcome] for arranging and conducting such workshops and for following up and evaluating the effects of what are, in effect, meetings of enemies and adversaries who are usually continuing coercion and violence while the workshops take place. The process starts from the very beginning by examining the problem of readiness for such an initiative.

EXERCISE 1.1: An Exercise in Preliminary Self Analysis.

Background

Potential third-party interveners, whether traditional mediators or those using recently developed collaborative problem solving approaches, do NOT plunge headlong into protracted, deep-rooted conflicts, radiating goodwill and process skills and hoping that this will get them accepted by the parties and lead towards a successful resolution of the conflict!

A great deal of preliminary analysis goes into deciding when conditions for an intervention are 'ripe', and how an intervention ought to be planned in order to 'gain entry' to 'the' conflict most appropriately (see Chapters 2 and 3).

Moreover, some self-analysis (at least) needs to be undertaken early on in the initiative into the third party's own perception of its motives; its relationship to the conflict and to the parties (even if the former is only tenuous or through another, similar conflict); its assumptions about the conflict it is considering interfering with; and any hidden agenda that the third 'party' and the individuals directly involved in its activities might be importing into an already tangled and difficult situation.

Exercise Scenario

Imagine that you are members of a small North American or European based research organization considering the launching of some intermediary initiative into the situation of deep-rooted, protracted conflict in the West African country of Zandia. (See the country profile of the Republic of Zandia at the end of this Handbook.)

Your Director and immediate superior have formed you into a 'Planning Group' for the exercise and have directed you to carry out a preliminary analysis of the possibility of undertaking some initiative (an informal dialogue, a problem solving workshop series, an academic conference) in the near future that might lead towards a resolution of the conflict.

Two other recent, exploratory initiatives carried out by ECOWAS and (more informally) by the Colville Center of Atlanta, GA, appear to have made no progress in bringing the parties together. Why, your Director has enquired, should we expect to have any greater success?

Exercise Task

Carry out the following analytical tasks and write a brief summary of your conclusions for your Director:

(A) Answer the following questions about your, and your organization's, proposed role in the conflict and in a process of conflict resolution:

- (1) Who are 'We' and what have been/are our relationships with the parties that appear to be 'core' in this conflict?
- (2) How might these relationships affect our reception?
- (3) What are our own motives for/objectives in undertaking any such intermediary initiative?
- (4) In what ways (however seemingly remote) are we personally or organizationally involved in (a) this particular conflict; (b) this type of conflict? How might this affect our judgement?
- (5) What sort of a conflict do we think this is? What parallels do we draw between this and other, more familiar conflicts?
- (6) What are our assumptions about the sources, main features and likely outcomes from this type of conflict?
- (7) On what are our assumptions based and how reliable are they? What experience have we had of this type of dispute?
- (8) What don't we know about this type of conflict that we feel might become important?
- (9) What sort of a final outcome to our initiative do we (a) anticipate; (b) hope for; (c) approve of ?
- (10) What sort of outcome would we (a) disapprove of; (b) try to avoid? Why?
- (11) If we become involved as an intermediary, under what terms and conditions will this occur ? How do we explain and have these terms accepted by the parties ? Under what circumstances do we terminate our initiative and withdraw?

(B) Add two further self-diagnostic questions that you feel your Director has left out – and answer them.

(C) Go home and read Louise Diamond's and John Paul Lederach's chapters in *Into the Eye of the Storm*.

CHAPTER 5

DIAGNOSING THE SITUATION

Parties to violent conflicts do not usually seek out mediation, facilitation or any form of problem-solving process. The reasons are easily understood by reference to the theory of conflict dynamics, which employs concepts like polarization, misperception, entrapment and escalation to suggest that, once a conflict is vigorously under way, it has a propensity to carry on and to escalate still further as adversaries try to 'win'.

1. Appropriate Conditions; Timing a Problem Solving Initiative.

For the same reasons, traditional diplomacy has for many centuries identified the critical importance of 'timing' in its mediation efforts. One common interpretation of 'timing' is that the parties will be ready to talk when, and only when, they have fought themselves to exhaustion or stalemate, or both (see Zartman, 1989 or Kriesberg & Thorson, 1991). The disadvantage of any approach based upon such a 'timing' perspective is that, when the parties see themselves as ready to talk, the costs of the conflict will already have been borne. Thus the parties will often wish to fight on to 'victory', both to recover the costs already endured and to 'make the adversary pay' - for past coercion, misdeeds or damage inflicted. It is also likely that leaders will have become entrapped by past statements, which commit them unequivocally to the continued prosecution of the conflict until success is achieved.

However, it remains the case that potential third parties (and the adversaries themselves) have to make informed judgements about whether the time is 'ripe' for some peacemaking initiative to be launched with any hope of success. This requires an assessment of the circumstances in which parties might be willing to send out peace feelers or to consider seriously those made by the enemy.

What - apart from mutual exhaustion - might be the signs that the time is, indeed, 'ripe' for a major peacemaking effort? What circumstances or signs might a potential intermediary seek to encourage it in a belief that the parties are likely to entertain the possibility of talk, as opposed to continued coercion? Are there any 'objective' indicators that commonly show that parties in conflict would be ready for serious discussion about a solution or, 'at least, willing to 'talk about talks'?

SEE EXERCISE 5.1

An alternative (and probably more useful) interpretation of the nature of 'the ripe moment' is one that depends less upon assessments of 'objective' conditions or of some 'balance of advantage' in the ongoing struggle, and more on whether the parties themselves seem clearly to have concluded that some negotiated or mediated settlement might (just) be preferable to carrying on the conflict at the present level of costs and with an increasingly remote prospect of a cheap victory. Indications that parties may be open to some mediatory or problem-solving initiative often take the form of their making genuine but unsuccessful conciliatory gestures (usually unilaterally) to one another. For example, prisoners may have been released 'as an act of humanity', public rhetoric softened, or unilateral truces briefly declared and [maybe] observed.

Unfortunately, such gestures may have been masked by continued use of coercion and violence, ignored as mere public relations exercises by their target, not acknowledged by their target because of constituency pressure, and thus abandoned in disappointment because of the lack of any clear and positive traction.

Another preliminary task for a third party is, therefore, to examine closely the parties' (recent) past behaviour for any signs of such conciliatory gestures, peace feelers or 'trial balloons'. Such signals (whether they take the form of deeds, or words or even a complete lack of action or response) can indicate to an alert third party that a 'window of opportunity' for a mediating or problem-solving initiative does exist - or, alternatively, that there seems to be no break in the adversaries' mutual determination to carry on and win, so that the proposed exercise may need to be postponed until more promising conditions and attitudes exist.

In principle, the ideal time to intervene would be at the earliest stage, before the conflict has become damaging. If the 'natural' cycle of coercion and reactive counter-coercion is to be broken, problem-solving initiatives must be attempted at an appropriate time before the initial escalation has peaked. But it is much easier to gain leaders' attention when conditions are such as to turn their minds towards alternative strategies for gaining their ends.

SEE EXERCISE 5.2

Whenever a conflict is at an appropriate stage, therefore, the parties will have to be approached and persuaded to meet. The question is: How?

Analytically, this process consists of three stages. First, the parties have to be identified, which is a more subtle task than might at first seem. Second, they have to be attracted to the problem-solving meeting. Third, when the parties' representatives (the participants) are invited, they must be satisfied that the arrangements for the meeting suggest some possibility of a productive outcome. Arranging all this takes both time and effort. Consultants and their actual facilitators are likely to be faced with resistance and forced to make choices about the invitations and about arrangements in general. Flexibility and a willingness to learn and to adjust quickly are necessary.

2. Selecting the Parties

Selecting the parties is a crucially important process. It must begin with the recognition that what everyday language designates single 'conflict' is usually an enormously complex, multi-level structure. It has overlapping parties and cross-cutting issues. In a model of that structure, particular disputes may be *analytically* distinct. In practice, they are likely to be intertwined and interdependent (see Kriesberg, 1980).

It follows that an initial task for third parties, whether using traditional mediation techniques or a problem-solving approach, is to carry out a thorough preliminary analysis of the conflict they about to approach in all its key aspects.

This raises two problems. The first is how consultants can know what aspects of the conflict are 'key', so that they can ask relevant questions that help them to understand, even in a tentative manner, the nature of the complex situation they are about to enter. This is a chicken-and-egg situation. How can one know enough about a conflict in order to ask relevant questions, when the only way of gaining such knowledge is to know what questions are likely to be relevant?

However, there are guidelines available from other disputes that can help in the construction of a useful checklist of preliminary enquiries (see, for example, Burton, 1987).

SEE EXERCISE 5.3

The second problem concerns the sources of answers to such questions. Potential third parties always need to be cautious about their initial analysis of a conflict and to treat it as nothing more than an amendable and provisional 'sketch' of the situation. Media analyses of any complex conflict are likely to be misleading and tainted by the organizing frameworks used by external reporters seeking "a story". Outside experts need to be treated with caution; academics, business people, journalists and diplomats all acquire their own vested interests in whatever interpretations they have developed. Press officers and official spokesmen obviously have a constructed view of a conflict that they wish others to accept unquestioningly. Diasporas (even official representatives in other countries) are likely to have different (and sometimes out of date) views of the conflict, compared to those directly and actively engaged in the struggle on the spot. All these, and others, can help to answer a preliminary set of questions about the chosen conflict but all need to be treated with some caution, no matter how complex and distant that conflict. The analysis first built up must be regarded with great caution, must be highly tentative and must not be the cause of a later rejection of more directly gain information that does not appear to 'fit'.

3. Principles of Selection

Conflict theory stipulates that issues create parties, and that parties adopt issues. In practice, though, there will probably be too many of both for such an aphorism to be of much practical help. Issues can split the relevant population into *categories*, such as classes; *collectivities*, such as an ethnically identifiable, self-aware people community or nation; and into *parties* of an openly political kind such as organizations or institutions. (This is, of course, only of many ways to classify the groupings formed by various cleavages.) Media reports are likely to refer to an array 'factions', 'caucuses', 'elements', 'armies', 'fronts' and 'tendencies' that may, or may not, appear to relate to some clear structure of the conflict. In all this, *who represents whom* is not at all obvious. The approach must start by acknowledging that *only those directly involved can really know what the conflict is 'about'*.

Faced with these problems, four principles are available to guide any problem-solving approach:

First, it is *practical* to begin with what is visible. The initial approach should be made to organizations or groups that are politically active. This suggests a rather narrow view of a complicated conflict situation, because it treats parties as *behaviour units* only, entities which are capable of acting, rather than of being or becoming, or sharing goals, formulating objectives, or possessing beliefs and images. Moreover, there exists a risk that significant parties which *do* have an interest in the outcome of the conflict - important 'stakeholders' - are initially left out. Nevertheless, it is a beginning.

Second, it is *essential* that problem-solving exercises should incorporate the grass-roots: the people whose interests, relationships and interactions are most severely damaged by the conflict. Here, the problem-solving approach contrasts sharply with traditional mediation, which is restricted, and necessarily so, by the rules of recognition and protocol, to dealing only with accredited authorities. Grass-roots populations often lack formal organizations and formal hierarchies. But the principle is there to guide problem solvers; *start at the bottom social level and move upwards*. Behind this recommendation is the theoretical proposition that legitimacy is the key to conflict resolution; no settlement can work unless it is acceptable to those affected by it and it can only become acceptable if they feel they are participating. Thus, the Turkish Cypriot community and their leaders were - and remain - essential participants in any efforts to resolve the conflict over Cyprus. The peoples of Ngorno Karabagh are key players in any efforts to resolve the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia over that region.

Third, problem solvers must try to eliminate completely the effects of their own previous assumptions and values. They may come to a conflict situation with firm views, perhaps based upon strong theoretical, ideological or personal foundations. These views will colour their perceptions about the conflict's structure, about the major parties, about the issues and about the probable shape of any feasible resolution. Being themselves human, they may also make moral judgements about groups that have engage in actions during the course of the conflict, which seem to range from the noble to the appalling. Both the theories and the values have to be put - as far as possible - into "cold storage" while

the initial appraisal and preliminary contacts are being made. The principle must be that the *conflict situation defines its own parties and issues*.

Because of this, in the past it has been found appropriate to focus the choice of consultants and facilitators for the workshop panel on *social* scientists who specialize in theory, and to exclude experts on the region or country in which the conflict occurs, although local scholars can play a useful advisory or 'checking' role at later stages in a problem-solving exercise. The perceptions of area studies experts can be coloured by their pre-suppositions based upon their intimate knowledge of the area. Moreover, they may identify too strongly with particular parties.

Fourth, the approach should not omit any group that might be able to damage or undermine the outcome. The question has to be asked: 'Who can prevent or undermine a resolution of this conflict?' Practicality then dictates that such groups need to be included, just as a sense of justice requires that all affected stakeholders should have a voice in any agreed solution.

In practice, this means that approaches have to be made both to 'extremists' and to those with a vested interest in the status quo, usually - but not always - represented by 'the authorities'. There are many settlement attempts in recent history which show the futility of any mediation that confines itself to building only on the 'reasonable middle ground' within a much wider spectrum of party attitudes and objectives.

Furthermore, it should always be open to question as to whether 'extremists' will always turn out, on investigation, to be more intransigent or 'unreasonable' than will 'moderates'. It is usually assumed that they will be, perhaps because extremists are 'extreme' in their methods, and it is generally believed that choice of methods - frequently violent - automatically correlates with intransigence, and often with irrationality and instability. (There is also the existence of the principle, frequently invoked in protracted conflicts, that one cannot negotiate with 'men of violence' - at least, not until they have wholly and 'permanently' abandoned the violence.)

In reality, none of this may be the case. It should not be forgotten that organizations and individuals can become 'locked in' to a pattern of 'extremist' behaviour, even when change is desired. Hence, removal of the impediments to changing that pattern of behaviour may be a first priority, rather than a refusal to engage extremists in dialogue. Then again, it is usually the case that the 'extremists' are the ones bearing the costs of continuing the conflict, directly and painfully. Thirdly, it is frequently the case that 'extremists' know clearly what they want and what their goals and values are, even if they fail to see any range of alternative methods for achieving these. (Moderates often tend to know what they do not want.) Finally, it is often the case that 'moderates' develop a stake in some status quo from which they have come to derive advantages denied to the 'extremists'. If a conflict takes place over issues of change, then moderates may, by becoming the beneficiaries of *limited* change, wish to perpetuate a new status quo and work against further change, which would mean that they might lose the rewards or roles they currently enjoy. Hence 'moderates' can become conservatives, defending a solution that serves their factional ends. Paradoxically, 'extremists' can, on occasions, turn out to be more flexible in many respects than 'moderates'. Their presence, at all events, can be essential and they should not be excluded.

4. The Question of 'Representatives'

Taking all four of the above criteria together, it is clear that a problem-solving approach can only succeed if it eventually manages to bring together in one room 'representatives' of the most important parties to a conflict.

There is some debate among problem solvers about the characteristics to be sought in the actual person who is to be invited to 'represent' a party's aspirations, interests, goals and positions. Should he or she be the top leader in person, turning the workshop into a summit? Should he be an 'outsider', an influential person who can speak more freely and act more flexibly? Or a person with an in-between role, powerful enough to matter, but low enough to carry the blame for any failure? There is no definitive answer to these questions as yet and, in any case, it is for the parties to decide who to nominate for a workshop, not the consultants or sponsors - although the sponsors need to make clear what kind of participant they seek and that it is they that, the last resort, make the selection and issue the invitations. However, we have operated with the help of some rough-and-ready guidelines in the past, and would suggest firstly that it is important that participants should be able to represent *to the workshop* their party's range of feelings, perceptions and aspirations about the issues in conflict, as well as being knowledgeable about underlying interests and values, about likely reactions to alternative future scenarios and options for solutions, and about significant obstacles to achieving any progress towards some acceptable resolution.

Given that it is desirable for the range of views within a party to be represented in any problem-solving exercise, it follows that a party's 'hawks' as well as 'doves' should be welcome members of a workshop. Frequently, there is a tendency on the part of third parties organizing discussions about peaceful solutions to want to exclude 'hardliners', on the grounds that they will be disruptive and unreasonable and that - at least in the initial stages of an exercise - one should start with 'moderates' or 'people who can at least talk to one another'. I would argue that this is a fundamental error, for reasons touched upon above. So-called 'hawks' are part of the spectrum of views within a party in conflict. They cannot be ignored or bypassed. They can prevent a solution. Hence, they have to be included and, I would argue, it is better to try to include them early than at a later stage of any discussions, by which time their previous exclusion will have increased their suspicion and mistrust of the whole process. 'Representatives' to a problem-solving exercise should, if at all possible, truly represent all strands of opinion within the adversaries.

Lastly, on this issue of representatives, there is the question of how 'official' workshop participants should be. Much experience suggests that, while there are advantages to having formal representatives join the problem-solving process at some stage and even to take it over so that it becomes a formal 'Track One' process, it is best to start the

process with influential private citizens, opinion leaders or even decision-makers who are (perhaps temporarily) out of office. Our rule of thumb is always to start a problem-solving exercise with participants whose distance from official positions enables them to think creatively, to speculate, and to engage in 'What if ...' exchanges, rather than needing to defend entrenched positions, or to participate simply in order to score points off the adversary. Flexibility is a key quality, and official representatives are not always able to demonstrate such a quality, even in the informal atmosphere of an academic workshop. Officials and leaders can be incorporated later in the process.

Whoever actually comes in person to the workshop, however, is somewhat less central than making sure that the important parties are represented there, and 'importance' is to be measured not by any external or theoretical judgement, but by the assessment of those directly affected. At each stage of the initial exploration, it likely that more and more parties will have to be considered. There is a cascade of possibilities. Very quickly, the consultants are likely to realize that a single problem-solving workshop can neither include all the parties nor deal with all the issues, and thus a series may prove necessary. But what such a workshop can do immediately, is to create communication between the two or more groups of antagonists closest to the core of the problem. It can be a lever that probes into the centre of a political log-jam.

5. The Dilemma of Divided Parties

Practical issues of 'selecting the parties' to be approached with invitations to participate in a problem-solving exercise are usually complicated by the likelihood that:

- (a) More than two clearly identifiable parties are involved in the conflict being analysed; indeed, several conflicts may be closely interlocked, so that it is more accurate to talk about 'conflict system' than a conflict; and
- (b) Even if there clearly seem to be only two parties, one or both of these might well be divided into rival factions or sub-parties, each claiming the right to speak for, and represent whole.

How to proceed in such situations is never clear, and there seem to be no absolutely correct answers to the question of which parties, groups or factions to involve in the first stages of problem-solving exercise. The rule of going for *the parties most directly affected by the conflict* cannot answer the question: Which conflict? Sometimes it is possible to identify and deal separately with loosely interconnected conflicts. But what is the answer in cases where adversaries are themselves divided into competing - and sometimes violently conflicting - factions? One answer that has been suggested is that of 'logical sequence', whereby a third party role could involve dealing:

Firstly with intra-party conflicts, so that the party so assisted (if the assistance is successful, which can be a large 'if') is then in better condition to work out a settlement with its adversary; and only

Secondly with the *inter-party conflict* involving the internal divided adversaries.

However, it seems questionable whether a third party that itself helped to unite one of the adversaries in a protracted, deep-rooted conflict (a unity that may enable that party to coerce its adversary more effectively) will then be able to continue its third-party role between the basic adversaries. Moreover, there appears to be no empirical evidence about the use of such a complicated exercise.

At present, the usual tactic for potential intermediaries seems to be to treat the issue of divided adversaries as part of the whole *timing* dilemma. Interveners have to wait to act until the parties *have* sufficient internal unity to be able to agree on goals and means put together an agreed negotiating position, identify their representatives, and make any agreement that might be concluded 'successfully stick'. In waiting for such minimally ideal conditions, however, third parties may find themselves waiting a very long time! They may wish to move before such conditions develop of their own accord, in the 'natural course' of a conflict.

SEE EXERCISE 5.4

6. The Dilemma of 'Power Imbalance'

Another problem confronting third-party consultants planning a problem-solving exercise with parties involved in a protracted conflict is what to do about a major 'power imbalance' between *those* adversaries.

This is a general problem that confronts anyone working practically in the field of conflict analysis and resolution, and there has been a great deal of discussion about both the morality and the effectiveness of using a range of non-directive, third party processes in situations where the two sides are wildly unequal in status, resources, information and influence - governments and minority groups, husbands and wives, organizations and individuals rich and poor. The debate about 'asymmetric conflict' started early in the development of the field, and continues to this day (see Mitchell, 1993 and 2000 for one approach to the nature of 'asymmetry').

Most of the debate has been inconclusive, partly because of the ambiguity of the concepts of 'power' and hence of 'power imbalance', although it has performed a useful service in undermining the often unstated assumption that third-party analysis and initiatives can safely be based upon the assumption that consultants and other intermediaries always deal with 'conflict between equals'.

There is no intention of minimizing the problem of imbalances between parties involved in problem-solving exercises of the types described in this Handbook. Differences between governments and insurgents, between rich and poor or militarily strong and weak countries, and between majority and minority communities obviously create

profound differences in the range of options perceived as realistic by adversaries. There are two reasons for thinking that such imbalances are less of a problem in the type of protracted conflicts discussed in this work than in certain others, where arguments for *equalization*, *empowerment* or *leveling the playing field* appear more urgent:

(1) The process itself, by altering participants' and parties' views of the situation from a struggle to be won to a problem to be jointly solved, and from a win-lose situation to one in which mutual gains, without corresponding losses, may be achieved, *can* make issues of power imbalance irrelevant, and switch the focus of the process from bargaining power to creativity and inventiveness.

(2) The degree of imbalance in the type of conflict being tackled by a problem-solving exercise may be minimal, or, at least, a minor factor in achieving a solution. This is not to say that imbalances do not exist, or that the parties do not have major advantages that they can exploit in coercing or threatening one another. However, the fact that the conflict is deep-rooted and has, been protracted suggests that the contest is not wholly one-sided, and that no stark imbalance exists between the adversaries., 'Power' is a multi-faceted concept (some would argue that it has so many meanings that the term itself, if unqualified, is meaningless) and in protracted conflicts it seems not unlikely that one party' advantage in one arena (military hardware, for example) is offset by the other's advantage in another (knowledge of terrain); or that superiority in one sense (diplomatic recognition) is balanced by inferiority in another (commitment to goals). Thus, consultants certainly never deal with 'equals', in any absolute sense (these probably do not exist), but usually with parties that are *equal enough* to be able to minimize, even if they can never ignore, issues of significant imbalance. The consultants can, therefore, proceed - cautiously - on the basis of an 'equal parties' model.

However, consultants certainly do need to consider issues of imbalance in at least three areas. The first - though frequently least important - concerns the extent to which any comparison between the parties shows a similar pattern of imbalance on many key dimensions, so that one party is clearly superior *in most respects*. For example, even though it could be argued that the main parties to the dispute over the Falklands/Malvinas Islands are the islanders themselves and the Government of Argentina, no sensible consultant, surely, would advocate a problem-solving exercise that started, at least initially, only with representatives of those two parties being present. On the other hand, an exercise involving only representatives of the Greek Cypriot community (80 per cent of the population of Cyprus) and the Turkish Cypriot community (under 20 per cent) might well be the best way to begin seeking a solution to the protracted conflict on the island.

A second aspect of imbalance that must concern consultants preparing for a problem-solving exercise is an imbalance between the participants actually present at workshops. A rough parity should be sought, even if it cannot be achieved to everyone's satisfaction. Parity includes approximately similar levels of skill, experience, knowledge and the ability to represent the views and positions of one's own side, for it is important that both sets of participants display roughly equivalent intellectual and analytical capacities if the exercise is to be a success.

It is also important, thirdly, that an ideal workshop, or series of workshops, should balance the intra-party influence of the two sets of participants, at least in their ability to communicate any findings from the workshop back to top decision-makers within their own party. An imbalanced workshop, in the sense that one set of participants has easy access to top decision-making circles 'back home' while the other is remote from its own decision- and peripheralized in intra-party politics, is a recipe for frustration, misunderstanding and the probable early breakdown of the entire exercise.

In the real world, none of these initial dilemmas is easily resolved and, frequently, consultants have to embark on a problem-solving exercise doing 'as best they can'. Once decisions have been taken to try to get a particular range of parties involved in an exercise - or, at least, in the first workshop of a proposed series - and to seek a particular set of representative participants, the next task is to approach those parties directly and to persuade key leaders to approve participation in the exercise. This next process is not without its problems.

EXERCISE 5.1: Interpreting the Auguries; Signs for Potential Intermediaries.

Background Discussion

In conflicts that are complex, protracted and deep rooted, it is usually the case that determining an appropriate moment to initiate a move towards de-escalation, or signal a willingness to talk, or to undertake some third-party initiative, is a very difficult process.

From the viewpoint of the involved parties, the problem is to decide what circumstances, events, signs, indicators or symbols show that the adversary is likely to entertain seriously the possibility of de-escalation (with its possible abandonment of advantage - or anticipated success -in the dispute) and the prospect of a negotiated settlement (with its implication of compromise and abandoning important goals).

From a third-party perspective, it is an equally uncertain matter of evaluating whether current circumstances make it likely that the adversaries will respond at all positively to a suggestion of a mediation initiative or a problem-solving exercise.

Such initial problems are particularly acute in international or major trans- or intranational disputes because:

- (1) Parties to such conflicts communicate from a variety of sources, towards different audiences and with different voices.
- (2) Often there are many parties (and factions of parties) involved in such complex conflicts.
- (3) Leaders often make statements or undertake actions (e.g. float 'trial balloons' about a settlement), which are mainly aimed at their followers in general - or, at least, the dove-ish elements among their followers.
- (4) Many civil and transnational conflicts are defined and genuinely perceived by the parties involved as being zero sum and hence non-negotiable. (It is frequently argued that an incumbent government can hardly negotiate its own demise with an insurgent movement seeking to replace it.)

Hence, the very first, major problem for initiating any deescalation, or a pre-negotiation phase of a conflict termination involves making a preliminary judgement about whether it is even worth considering, if you are a party to the conflict, the possibility of a peace feeler or a statement indicating a 'willingness to talk'; or, if you are a potential intermediary, some preliminary enquiry about the relevance of beginning a third-party peacemaking process.

Note that, at this very early stage, what is being sought involves some key structural changes in the conflict, or within the parties themselves, that might make the situation more conducive to commencing (cautiously) some peace process or, at least, might make the parties more likely to be willing to talk as an alternative to continuing the fight. Such considerations come before actions or statements constituting peace feelers from either side. That comes later.

Hence, the problem seen from the viewpoint of one of the antagonists involves asking such questions as:

- (1) How do we determine to our own satisfaction that there is any point in signalling a willingness to negotiate (or, at least, to de-escalate) to the other side?
- (2) What criteria can we use to evaluate whether the other side might be ready for a change of policy, or be in a 'more reasonable' state of mind?
- (3) How can we make a preliminary evaluation of whether the other side might respond positively to our peace feeler - or not.

Seen from the outside and from the viewpoint of a third- mediator or consultant, similar questions arise:

- (1) How can we evaluate the probability of our offer of a third party initiative being positively viewed and accepted by the parties in conflict?
- (2) What are the circumstances (what indicators should we look for) that will tell us that this is an appropriate moment to suggest some form of third-party involvement?
- (3) What might need to change in the present circumstances before we can be reasonably sure that the key parties are ready to respond positively to our approach?
- (4) Is this conflict anywhere near being 'ripe for resolution'? In purely theoretical terms, the questions revolve around the issue of whether it is possible to identify what sets of circumstances make parties engaged in deep-rooted and protracted conflict more (or less) ready to seek alternative means of achieving goals or alternative solutions for their conflict? When do parties in conflict seek alternatives, and what are the changes in the conflict that begin a process of leaders changing their minds about their best course of action?

It is important for third parties to realize that both they and the parties in conflict do hold theories about what brings about change and what constitutes a 'ripe moment' and that these theories - whether right or wrong - do help to determine whether any kind of peace process will even get through its initial stages.

Exercise Scenario I

YOU are members of the Political Planning and Advisory Committee of the Azanian Liberation Front (ALF). For over seven years, the ALF has been engaged in an armed struggle to liberate the Azanian region of the Republic of Zandia from the capricious and increasingly brutal administration of the Government of Zandia. 'Self-determination for Azanians' continues to be the main aim of the ALF, although some of its more extreme members have called for secession and union with neighbouring (and ethnically similar) Samaale, which has been of great assistance in the struggle, providing 'safe areas', resources, etc. for what has, unfortunately, proved to be an increasingly costly guerrilla campaign (see the "Area Handbook" Map in the final Appendix).

Until now, save for abortive talks at the beginning of the struggle, there have been no substantive negotiations about the issues in conflict with the Zandian Government. The ALF has concentrated upon organizing both the military campaign and - where possible - a social and political infrastructure in the areas not under the control of the Zandian Government.

Exercise Task I

Now, the sudden death in action of two of the founding leaders of the ALF has brought a new leadership to power, and the Secretary-General has asked your Committee to provide some useful guidelines for a decision about whether it might be worthwhile sending out a peace feeler, via another government, to the Zandians. There are those who have been arguing that, by now, the Zandians will be ready to consider a negotiated settlement. Others have argued that Zandian intransigence remains and there has been no change in Zandian objectives or intentions.

The Secretary-General requires some suggestions about what indications there might be, one way or the other. 'What do we look for,' she has said, 'that will show whether the Zandians might be ready to respond positively? What might be positive indicators and what negative? Are the key indicators structural or behavioural; economic or psychological; real or symbolic; political or military?'

Your Committee chairman has been instructed to supply a list of no more than 10 types of indication that might give a clue as to whether the Zandians would be willing to consider an alternative to the present situation of continual guerrilla attacks and counter-insurgency campaigning.

You have also been requested to comment on the likely reliability of the various indications you suggest.

Exercise Scenario 2

YOU are members of the Zandian President's Advisory Liaison Committee, some coming from the Zandian Department of Home Affairs and others from the Ministry of Internal Security.

For over seven years the northern region of the country, populated mainly by people of the Azanian ethnic group, has been wracked by a guerrilla war begun by members of the secessionist Azanian Liberation Front, an organization apparently led by a wholly intransigent group of fanatics, and covertly supported by powerful political elements in the neighbouring Democratic Republic of Samaale.

The ALF's depredations have now spread to neighbouring provinces in spite of the best efforts of police General Service Units (GSU) and the Zandian Army. At no time have the rebels seemed willing to consider rational discussion of, or talks about, their Secessionist goals, so that the Government's reactions have necessarily concentrated upon maintaining law and order in the affected regions. The cost of this in lives and resources has been mounting over the last three years.

Exercise Task 2

It now appears, however, that there has been a change in the leadership of the ALF, caused - according to police intelligence sources - by the recent deaths (in a GSU ambush, according to rumours) of two of the old guard ALF leadership. The President feels that there might be a possibility of sending out a peace feeler at some stage in the near future, when an 'opportune' moment presents itself, but he has no wish to do so if such an initiative has absolutely no chance of eliciting some positive reaction from the ALF leadership. The question is, when might such an opportune moment occur and what would be the best indications that it has, indeed, arisen?

The President has asked the Committee for some guidance about what signs or circumstances might be sought as indicators that the ALF leadership might be preparing at least to consider 'cutting its losses' and abandoning its intransigent policies. 'What are common indications?' he has asked. 'What sorts of guides to what the other side might be thinking can we get from others' experience? How will I know when best to move, if I want to move?'

The Chairman of the Committee has promised to come up with a short list of suggestions (10- 12) regarding this problem. The President has asked for immediate action, and expects a draft memorandum tomorrow afternoon.

EXERCISE 5.2: Extending an Olive Branch.

Background Discussion

Once it has been decided by a set of leaders of a party in conflict that the time is, indeed, appropriate for an initiative intended to move towards a negotiated settlement, the next problem becomes how to initiate a de-escalation process and get 'talks about talks' moving.

What form should a cautious yet credible conciliatory gesture take? It has to be kept in mind that the objective must be to signal a willingness to talk (but NOT to surrender) and that the signal must convey a reasonable willingness to compromise but not give the adversary an impression of weakness - of over-willingness or over-eagerness to move towards a ceasefire and a negotiated solution.

Again, there is the problem of how to signal clearly to an adversary so that the move will stand out from all the other (essentially negative) signals that have been (and are probably still being) directed towards them by the Initiator's decision-makers, spokesmen and coercive agents. Should the gesture be an unprecedented move (a 'single, dramatic gesture' like Anwar al Sadat's trip to Jerusalem in 1977) or a series of somewhat minor moves that cumulatively have an effect? Is the best strategy something along the line of Charles Osgood's Graduated and Reciprocal Initiatives in Tension-Reduction (GRIT) proposal, or an 'I will if you will' offer, or a unilateral, irrevocable concession that might send the wrong signal?

Furthermore, what plans should be made in anticipation of a positive response from the Target? (i.e. what should the second step be?) Alternatively, what should the Initiator's reaction be if the Target reacts negatively to the gesture or, maybe even worse, simply ignores it? And what will be taken as an unambiguous sign that the adversary has, indeed, responded positively rather than negatively? How can one side plan to keep the momentum of a deescalatory process going and what should be the ultimate aim of starting such a process; a lessening of tension through confidence-building measures (CBMs); a bilateral truce or a ceasefire; an agreement to meet to discuss negotiations; an agreement about an acceptable intermediary or a forum for talks? Should there even be an agreed objective at the start of a de-escalation process or is simply starting the process, remaining flexible and seeing what develops a good enough goal?

How does one party offer the other an effective 'Olive Branch'?

Exercise Scenario 1: The Irish War

It is 30 May 1921, five years after the unsuccessful Easter Rising against British rule in Ireland by a small band of nationalists led by Patrick Pearse and the Sinn Fein movement, and two and a half years since the post-war 'khaki' elections throughout Britain returned to power in London a parliament consisting, in one observer's words, of 'hard faced who looked as though they had done well out of the war' resulted in a somewhat unstable coalition government of Liberals and Conservatives, led by Liberal Prime Minister, David Lloyd George.

The same 1918 elections returned Sinn Fein candidates in every constituency in Ireland, with the exception of Ulster, where the Ulster Unionist majority held together, and the constituency for Dublin University. In January 1919 the Sinn Fein MPs, led by Eamon de Valera, refused to attend the British Parliament in Westminster and, instead, set up their own national assembly, Dail Eireann, in Dublin, where they proceeded to declare themselves independent and to draw up a new, republican Constitution for Ireland. A delegation was sent to the Peace Conference then meeting in Versailles, but this had no success in getting Ireland's aspirations or separate existence recognized by any of the delegates there, even by President Woodrow Wilson of the USA.

Also in January 1919 the first attacks on police and military units by the Irish Republican Army (IRA), under the command of the shadowy figure of Michael Collins, were carried out and two policemen were killed. These incidents began a steadily escalating guerrilla war between the IRA and the British security forces, who were supplemented from 1920 onwards by the notorious 'Black and Tans', specially recruited as a counter-force by the British Government. The violence spread throughout the country, affecting the main towns and remote countryside with assassinations and attacks followed by reprisals and ambushes. In the north east, unionists took part in campaigns of terror against nationalists living in Belfast and Londonderry and Sinn Fein announced a boycott of goods from that part of the country as the nationalist/unionist divide deepened.

In September 1919 the Dail was formally banned by the British Government and many of its members arrested (including Arthur Griffith, acting as President of the Irish Republic, in the absence of de Valera in the USA). In August 1920, the British Government passed the Government of Ireland Act, which established two regional parliaments in Ireland, one for the north east (Ulster) and one for the rest of the country in Dublin. This was denounced by Sinn Fein leaders as quite insufficient to meet their aspirations but Sinn Fein participated in the 14 May elections, being returned unopposed in all but one southern Irish constituency. A Unionist majority was returned for the northern Ireland parliament, due to open formally on 7 June.

The situation now appears to have reached a stalemate, in spite of Lloyd George's claim in January 1921 to 'have murder by the throat'. Attacks and reprisals continue. Most of Sinn Fein's political leaders are in jail. Sinn Fein has announced its intention of boycotting the regional parliament in Dublin. Public opinion in Britain is turning against the war and Liberal members of Parliament, particularly, are becoming uneasy about a policy that requires 80,000 troops in Ireland and the expenditure of vast sums of money merely to keep in check 'a handful of bandits and malcontents'. Both sides appear to be trapped in a slowly escalating circle of violence and counter-violence, with no way out.

Exercise Task 1A

YOU are advisers to Eamon de Valera, President of the Irish Republic, who continues to remain at large in Dublin, although the British Government issued a warrant for his (and your) arrest many months ago.

In spite of the recent Sinn Fein successes in the May elections and the convening of the second Dail Eireann from the MPs elected, the campaign for Irish independence is not achieving the headway that had been anticipated 18 months ago. No other

government has recognized your government. Mr de Valera's campaign for funds and support in the USA has produced some funds but little useful support, especially within US Government circles. On the military front, matters seem to have reached a stalemate and arms supplies remain problematical. The seizure and burning of the Dublin post office was a major publicity coup for the Republic, but resulted in the almost complete destruction of the IRA's Dublin Brigade. Commandant Tom Barry and his Cork Brigade continue to harass the security forces successfully but other areas are under martial law and many people in both town and country are suffering considerable hardship from reprisals. Moreover, the Minister of Defence, Cathal Brugha, and the Minister of Finance, Michael Collins, are deeply divided about the utility of carrying on the armed struggle. The situation of the nationalist community in the north is appalling.

On the other hand, there are signs that the British Government - or some of its members - might be willing to consider some form of negotiated settlement. Recent informal contacts from London, through such prominent English Catholics as Lord Derby or through the Australian Archbishop of Perth, have indicated that London's position of complete intransigence might be changing. The question is how to begin to move towards talks, especially given the commitment of many Sinn Fein hardliners to continued military action until "complete victory".

The President has asked you to present him with two alternative means of clearly signaling a willingness to talk - but NOT a willingness to give up and surrender - to London. He has asked you to suggest concrete things the Irish Government might do and/or say that would begin a process of 'talks about talks' with the British ("... We must go very carefully," he has warned you). He wants you to evaluate the pros and cons, the advantages and drawbacks of the two alternative courses of action you suggest and present him with a short memorandum summarizing your ideas and recommending one of the options.

'...Remember, nothing too drastic,' he has said, 'We don't want to send the wrong signals to the Brits and, just as important, I can't afford to ignore people like Cathal and his supporters who want to try to beat the British to their knees...'

Exercise Task I B

YOU are members of the Planning Staff of the Cabinet Secretariat in No. 10 Downing Street, with direct responsibility and access to the Prime Minister. Latest information, both political and military, on the uprising in Ireland indicates that things are not going well. Although the Government is deriving some comfort from the recent success of unionist candidates in the elections for an Ulster Parliament, the complete victory of Sinn Fein candidates in the south - although probably attributable to the IRA's policy of intimidation that prevented any other candidates from standing for most seats - has meant that there is little chance of setting up a regional administration in Dublin as the Cabinet had hoped.

Rebel attacks on military and civilian targets in the south of Ireland remain a constant reminder that the Prime Minister's claim to be winning the guerrilla war against the IRA was premature. Matters seem to be at a stalemate, with security forces only being able to keep the violence to a 'reasonable' level but not to destroy the IRA in any final sense. There is a growing realization that most people in southern Ireland now support Sinn Fein's aims and regard the IRA favourably. Moreover, there are signs that informed public opinion in Britain is growing weary of, and embarrassed by, a continuing war that was originally portrayed simply as a rebellion by a small minority of fanatics and romantics. The Liberal Party is particularly worried and there are signs that some of its leading members no longer support a military 'solution' to the Irish problem.

The Prime Minister has requested you to suggest two alternative ways in which he (or some other person or institution) might be able to send a clear signal to the Sinn Fein leaders in Ireland that the British Government might be willing to consider a negotiated solution. He is reluctant to do this - his two previous attempts secretly to 'sound out' the republican leaders about the possibilities of a negotiated political arrangement were rebuffed by Sinn Fein - and he has ordered that this task should be undertaken in the strictest secrecy. He wishes to be presented with a brief memorandum containing two options for the Government, plus some discussion of the relative pros and cons of each move or course of action, and a recommendation as to which he should undertake.

'... I cannot afford, politically, to be seen to be giving in to the pressure of gunmen,' he has remarked. 'Those lunatics on the Tory right wing would bring down the Government if anything other than military triumph were to be contemplated publicly. Not a word of this must leak out yet - and we should NOT indicate to de Valera that we are willing to give everything up - anyway, I'm not - just that we might be willing to talk. Have the memo on my desk by Friday morning.'

Exercise Scenario 2: Towards Negotiations in the Second Sudanese Civil War.

It is December 1989, and the fighting in the second Sudanese Civil War continues in the south of the country, hampering relief efforts and bringing further destruction and starvation to an already exhausted and devastated region, while imposing on the Government in Khartoum further large costs in terms of resources and lives (See Map 2 below.)

Since the brief flurry of activity following the military coup of 30 June 1989, there has been no further mention of peace talks or negotiations from either the military government of Brigadier Omar al-Bashir or from the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), led by Colonel John Garang. There is considerable disappointment in some political circles in Khartoum that the accord signed in December 1988 by the SPLA and the Democratic Unionist Party leaders, and the adoption of a peace policy by the overthrown Prime Minister al Mahdi in March 1989 have not been vigorously pursued by the military regime. (There are persistent - if unconfirmed - rumours in Khartoum that the coup was intended to prevent any agreement with the southern movements that made concessions about *sharia*)

Some commentators have argued that Brigadier al-Bashir's regime has been too preoccupied with consolidating its hold on power in the capital and the north to launch any major new peacemaking initiative aimed at ending Sudan's second civil war, which broke out in the early 1980s, partly as a result of the efforts of the then Sudanese President, Gafaar al-Nimiri, to

restructure the south's regional autonomy and to introduce Islamic law (*sharia*) into the southern region. Certainly, the regime has concentrated its efforts on controlling Sudanese trade unions, banning political parties and putting on a series of show trials of leaders from the previous regimes, while pursuing the war in the south at a lower level of violence than its predecessor.

However, it is also the case that the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) has made no statements that modify its far-reaching demands put forward on 16 August last. Its leader, Colonel Garang, has occupied much of the intervening period in a series of international visits to 'explain the purposes of the Sudanese people's revolution' but also (undoubtedly) to garner support for the SPLM's cause. The situation appears currently to be at a complete and tragic impasse.

Exercise Task 2A

YOU are a member of the Sudanese Military Government's Coordinating Committee on the Southern Problem, which advises President Omar Hassan Ahmed al-Bashir on the conduct of the struggle with the southern rebels, led by Colonel John Garang.

Brigadier al-Bashir has decided to make one final effort to end the struggle in the south through a negotiated settlement and is seeking to re-activate the stalled peace process by initiating some cautious set of conciliatory gestures towards the SPLM, without making any significant moves away from the Government's public bargaining position. He has asked for advice from your Committee on what might be offered to the SPLM and by what means.

Specifically, your Committee Chairman has been asked for a short (two sides at most) Memorandum outlining a series of actions or statements designed to reduce tension, to begin building (at least) a minimum level of mutual trust and to de-escalate a difficult *impasse* between the Government and the SPLM.

You know that Brigadier al-Bashir has recently been reading about the problems of de-escalation and pre-negotiations, (particularly the work of Charles Osgood on GRIT and Amitai Etzioni on 'gradualism') and is wondering whether it might be possible to use some such approach to de-escalate the present situation. He wants recommendations about concrete steps that might have a positive impact on the leaders of the SPLM.

At the same time, he has impressed upon the Chairman that whatever statements or actions you suggest cannot be so fundamental that they will weaken either a future negotiating position or present security and the stability of the Government. Moreover, suggestions cannot be allowed to compromise his own position internally by making him vulnerable to criticism or attacks by 'hawks' and other critics within his own Government. His present position is reasonably secure, but it can be undermined by a mistake.

'You have a very fine line to tread!' he has said.

For one possible answer to this problem see "Alternative Solutions" in the Appendices.

Exercise Task 2B

YOU are a member of the staff of the Political Bureau of the Sudanese Peoples Liberation Movement, which advises Colonel John Garang on the conduct of the struggle with the illegal military Government in Khartoum, currently led by Brigadier al-Bashir.

Colonel Garang has decided to make one final effort to end the struggle for Sudan through a negotiated settlement and is seeking to re-activate the stalled peace process by initiating some cautious set of conciliatory gestures towards the regime in Khartoum, but without making any significant moves away from the SPLM's public bargaining position. He has asked for advice from the staff on what might be offered to the military government, and by what means.

Specifically, your Bureau Chairman has been asked for a short, (two sides at most) Memorandum outlining a series of actions or statements designed to reduce tension, to begin building (at least) a minimum level of mutual trust and to de- a difficult impasse between the SPLM and the government.

You know that Colonel Garang has recently been reading about the problems of de-escalation and pre-negotiations, particularly the work of Charles Osgood on GRIT and Amatai Etzioni on 'gradualism') and is wondering whether it might be possible to use some such approach to de-escalate the present situation. He wants recommendations about concrete steps that might have a positive impact on the leaders in the north.

At the same time, he has impressed upon the Chairman that whatever statements or actions you suggest cannot be so fundamental that they will weaken either a future negotiating position or present security and the stability of the SPLM leadership. Moreover, suggestions cannot be allowed to compromise his own position internally by making him vulnerable to criticism or attacks by 'hawks' and other factional critics within his own leadership. His present position is reasonably secure, but it can be undermined by a mistake. 'You have a very fine line to tread!' he has said.

EXERCISE 5.3: Listing Key Questions about the Conflict.

Background Discussion

When preparing for mediation or any analytical problem-solving exercise, consultants and facilitators should attempt to find out an *adequate* amount of key background material on the conflict, while bearing in mind that any answers they find to initial questions should be treated as tentative until that information can be confirmed during actual contact with those directly involved in the conflict - particularly during the workshop itself.

To carry out this task requires that the consultants themselves have some prior theory about the key questions to be asked about any conflict, or - at least - some idea about the questions it has been helpful to ask, in a preliminary way, in other cases of conflict that they have experienced.

Exercise Task

(1) Construct a list of key questions about the conflict that you need to ask when considering the launching of any mediation or an analytical problem-solving initiative and thus facing the need to inform yourself about the dimensions of the problem you and your group of intermediaries or face.

What do you need to know about the conflict before moving out of the purely diagnostic stage?

(2) Suggest a list of possible sources of information regarding each of these key questions, and indicate the extent to which you think it would be realistic to expect to answer each in the preliminary, diagnostic stages of the exercise.

Where might this preliminary information be available?

(3) Draft a useful 'Summary Data Form' for use in systematically outlining key data and in comparing one conflict with another or highlighting major changes in a protracted conflict as it alters over time.

How can this information be presented in a compact, comparative and useful form?

EXERCISE 5.4: Selecting the Parties

Background Discussion

One of the most crucial, preliminary decisions about any mediation, conciliation or problem-solving initiative concerns which parties to approach with an invitation to participate in the process. This initial selection can influence the whole course of the initiative, for good or ill.

On the one hand, this can be viewed as a 'level of analysis decision', involving choice about at what level in a complex conflict system the initial efforts to achieve a solution should be aimed. On the other, it can be regarded as a choice between accepting existing judgements (often merely based on degrees of organization or legitimacy) about what are, ostensibly, the 'obvious' parties to a conflict; or ignoring the obvious and taking into account, for example, the interests of those who might not yet have achieved a level of coherent organization, status or recognition that would clearly make them players, or even 'stakeholders', in the game.

The choice is seldom an easy one, even in 'straightforward' conflicts apparently involving states and national governments. For example, are the Falkland Islanders 'a party' to the Anglo- dispute over the Falklands/Malvinas, and what are the practical and political implications for a positive - or a negative - answer to that question? In more complex situations involving multi-party conflicts or deeply divided parties, the problem is even trickier. Thus, third parties, whether mediators, conciliators or facilitators, face frequent dilemmas when confronting the apparently simple, initial question; Who are the parties to this conflict?

However, an informed choice must be made, the grounds for making it understood and the future implications at least considered. A carefully thought-out approach then has to be made to those parties.

Exercise Scenario

The First Sudanese Civil War.

It is late summer 1971 and YOU are members of a special Advisory Committee set up in Geneva by the World Council of Churches (WCC), which is considering a mission to Sudan to make contact with the new military Government of General Nimiery in Khartoum and other 'key parties' in the Sudanese civil war, which has been raging in the south and west of that country since the early 1960s. This WCC mission will explore the possibility of mediating through a peace conference to end the war, and needs a clear picture of who ought to be involved in such a conference in order to begin the task of sounding out the views of key leaders regarding their attendance at the proposed conference.

The WCC has been encouraged partly by the fact that General Nimiery has privately made clear his desire for a negotiated settlement. Moreover, this desire seems to have increased since the failed coup against him, led by members of the influential Sudanese Communist Party, the leadership of which has since been decimated in army reprisals. The General now seems more secure - at least in the north of the country as he has also dealt very firmly with the powerful Islamic sects in the north and their political parties, which are now banned.

The problem for the WCC at the moment is to decide which of the opposition 'parties' should be approached with a view to participation in any future talks. The fighting in Darfur Province in the west of the country seems to be escalating and it is felt that efforts should be made to include this problem in any peace conference. However, the main effort is likely to be directed towards the war in the south.

Even here, however, there are major ambiguities. Many southerners, particularly among the western educated elite, have continued to work with the Government in Khartoum and, indeed, the late Secretary-General of the Sudan Communist Party, who led the coup against General Nimiery, was himself a southerner. Southerners hold government posts in the Khartoum administration and claim to represent a fruitful means of influencing Khartoum policy. Members of the Sudan African National Union (SANU) and of the old Southern Front (SF) have been criticized for their policy of working with and in Khartoum, for participating in northern political activity and, increasingly, for 'selling out'.

The situation actually in the south of the country is even more confusing, as political rivalries, often leading to the setting up of new organizations and the splitting of old ones, arise from the existence of the many different ethnic and tribal groupings in the region (see Maps 3 and 4 below). According to the latest information available to the WCC (information has been sparse since all Christian missionaries were ejected from the region), these intra-southern divisions remain strong and based upon personal, as well as ethnic, rivalries with a major concern being the dominance of Dinka political leaders in many political organizations.

It is rumoured that it was this fear of Dinka dominance that led to the break up of the Nile Provisional Government (NPG), which was formed in March 1969 and which had its headquarters in Zaire. Initial divisions in this organization appeared early on, ostensibly over the NPG's lack of action in support of the armed struggle against the Khartoum Government, and over its inability to control effectively the main guerrilla organization, the *Anya Nya*. Two small breakaway groups formed themselves as rivals to the NPG, calling themselves the Sudan Azania Organization (SAO) and the Sue River Republic Organization (SRRO).

A more important division appeared late in 1969, when Major General Taffeng, declaring his '... dissatisfaction with Dinka domination of NPG and its so-called President, Gordon Mortat-Mayan' established the Anyidi State Government (ASG), which was based upon the border region with Uganda and which carried out extensive guerrilla operations in the south west of the region. Most recently, new information has been received about the formation of yet another 'umbrella' organization for the southern forces fighting against Khartoum, although whether this has been established as a rival to, or replacement for the ASG is difficult to ascertain. The Southern Sudanese Liberation Movement (SSLM) is apparently headed by a Colonel Joseph Lagu, who was originally a Minister in the ASG as well as being its military commander in the eastern regions near the Ethiopian border. Colonel Lagu has apparently managed to gain control of the main southern guerrilla force fighting in the region, the *Anyi Nya*, and it is rumoured that this is partly because of his control of weapons and other military equipment supplied by the Israeli Government. The SSLM is obviously an important new element in the constellation of southern parties claiming to represent the aspirations of the southern peoples.

Exercise Task

Write a short position paper for an imminent WCC meeting containing your recommendations on whether it should undertake the mission at the present time and, if so, which parties, and leaders, a WCC mission to Sudan should attempt to contact. Select the 'parties' to the conflict to be approached with a view to their inclusion in a future initiative that seeks a solution to the conflict in Sudan. Which, if any, parties should be excluded, for what reasons and with what likely consequences.

Elucidate the reasons for making the selection and for rejecting alternative possibilities. Set out the likely consequences of your choice and make contingency plans for including - or excluding - other (key?) parties at later stages of the WCC peacemaking initiatives.

For a number of possible answers to this problem see the section on "Alternative Solutions" in the Appendices.

CHAPTER 6

CONTACTS: ACCESS TO THE PARTIES

1. Approaching the Parties

Having settled upon an initial choice of 'key' parties, the consultants must consider the best means of approaching them. The job is somewhat like that of a salesman with a new product. On the one hand, there are unlikely to be many competitors, although there is now an increasing number of organisations offering facilitation services, but as yet with no problem of loyalty to existing 'brand names'. On the other, the potential 'customers' have no awareness of the benefits that the new product might bring to them. So they may be inclined to slam the door in the salesperson's face. This task, therefore, is a challenge. But it has been done, which means that it can be done again. And it is a job that must be done many times in the future, if there is to be any hope that the world's unsolved problems of protracted conflict, violence and war are to give way to more productive human activities.

The problem breaks down into a series of choices. Who should be approached as a 'representative' of each party? What is the best way to reach the chosen person? What should be said to that person, once access has been gained?

2. Representatives.

The selection of the 'best' persons to approach within a particular group or party is straightforward, at least in principle. The rule is to go to the top, because only the senior leadership can clear a request for participation in a serious problem-solving exercise. Subordinates are in no position to respond at all, still less in a positive fashion, to such an unfamiliar initiative. If they say anything, it will be 'no'. Moreover, once the decision *not* to participate is taken at a lower level in a hierarchy, there is a vested interest in preventing it being changed. The ideal is, therefore, to approach a person who can decide *without further reference*.

Going to the top level does, however, require careful research and forethought. It should, for example, not violate the principle of staying as close as possible to the grass-roots. The organization is what matters most. Within that organization, the need is to find a person *without whose approval the organization cannot act*. At times this might be some 'power behind the scenes', some unobtrusive adviser or *chef de cabinet*.

Finding the name may involve tricky detective work but not 'undercover'. Consultants can and should be entirely frank in their enquiries, following the principle of 'open communication', for problem solving has no axe to grind other than its commitment to understanding and research. But they must also be discreet. They have no secrets to keep, except the professional confidentiality that attaches to their previous casework, but media publicity for their efforts could be damaging for the persons they wish to meet. It is a delicate balance, the same one that is involved in good diplomacy.

It is necessary also to make a judgement about the strength of the leadership to be approached. Only leaders who feel themselves to be securely 'in command' will accept even the smallest risk of sanctioning contacts with 'the enemy'. So consultants must consider the levels of unity and stability within each party. If either appears to be low, then it may be necessary to direct problem-solving initiatives towards the intra-party dispute. This is consistent with a phenomenon often noted in the theory of conflict dynamics. Situations of change, stress, conflict and crisis necessarily produce a chain of political realignments and re-combinations. No conflict can be resolved unless the exercise, involves the leaders of the future as distinct from the past.

3. Making Contact.

Having selected the leaders to be approached, the consultants can move to the next stage, which requires a switch of style and operation. Choosing the right person is an intellectual activity. Arranging to talk to him or her is a practical job of work. In the nature of the problem-solving method, it has to be undertaken without any of the powers and privileges of officialdom. But decision-makers are not likely to take an enthusiastic interest in academic research project, which is what a problem-solving exercise both appears to be - and largely is. In practice, the doorway to senior members of any hierarchy (and even loosely structured political groups do tend to form leadership hierarchies) tends to be barred to all visitors by an assortment of guardians and gatekeepers.

4. Credibility.

Gaining access, then, is difficult but it is not likely to remain quite so difficult in the future. Problem solving has a huge advantage over traditional forms of mediation, and as its qualities and characteristics become

more widely appreciated, the advantage is likely to grow. It provides a new basis of legitimacy for third-party intervention; *professional social science*.

Social science has something in common, at least potentially, with the natural sciences on which the medical profession has built such a prominent and constructive role in society. Conflict theory does not stand wholly in the same relationship to communal violence, riot and war that pathology does in relation to disease, but the two do share the procedure of scientific analysis. Economists, psychologists, management consultants, cost accountants, lawyers and development specialists have begun, since the Second World War, to develop an expertise, a usefulness and also a mystique. Together, they demonstrate a potential for creating an entire range of socially useful *applications* for social science. Analytical problem solving offers a comparable basis for professionalism, because it can be carried out by consultants whose relevance consists of their formal, theoretical knowledge of conflict, its causes, dynamics and effects. Ideally, their standing is dependent upon their competence and experience as qualified researchers. In respect of any given conflict, consultants are 'neutral', in the sense of having nothing political to gain or lose by the outcome. What they have to offer is familiarity with protracted conflicts, technical analysis and prediction based upon analysis applied to other cases of conflict. They meet the representatives of parties in an academic setting of confidentiality, like professional consultants in any other field. At all times, their 'vested interests' lie in their research. They are people who want to know more, not about a particular conflict for its own sake, but about social and political processes of conflict *in general* and how this *generalised* knowledge might be able to help in finding resolutions to *particular* conflicts.

The contrast with traditional forms of mediation is fairly obvious. The great mediators of the past all possessed a rare credibility, known in the literature as *salience*. They were relevant to a particular conflict certainly, or their successes could not have occurred. But *this* was either because they possessed powers of inducement and coercion ('leverage') derived from their role as spokesmen for major states (as in the cases of Secretary of State Kissinger or President Carter) or, perhaps, international organizations (such as UN Secretaries-General Hammarskjöld or Kofi Annan); or perhaps because they fortuitously possessed, as individuals, unique achievements of wisdom, faith, persuasiveness and courage or, as representatives of uninvolved states, true neutrality. But in all cases, their authority was essentially a scarce resource.

Professional authority, however, based upon skills which can be learned, is a plentiful and *growing* resource. Institutions can be created that train people for it. In this respect, the future of collaborative problem solving as a salient basis for resolution efforts is more than promising.

5. Channels.

This foundation of confidence may be needed by the consultant when undertaking the practical task of gaining access to 'senior representatives' of parties in conflict, for this can be a thoroughly dispiriting business.

Deciding whom to contact and convince is one thing. The main issues to be faced involve answering such questions as:

- (1) What is the best way of effecting an entry to decision-making circles in the relevant parties?
- (2) Which party does one approach first? (Our experience is that it is important to make as nearly simultaneous approaches to all the key parties as is practical)
- (3) Through what channels should the initial contact be made?
- (4) Should one try to make contact through local agencies or by 'going in cold'?
- (5) How does one evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using particular channels, and how will each affect credibility

The original technique used by the Centre for the Analysis of Conflict in the late 1960s was direct and unorthodox. It simply consisted, initially, in sending a formal invitation by mail, and following this up with a personal visit by one or two consultants. The invitation stated that an academic research project was to be undertaken and requested the participation of the parties to conflict. The consultants then had to be prepared to take time and expend such diplomatic skills as they possessed in gaining entry to the person they had come to see.

Subsequent approaches have included establishing a long-term partnership with appropriate local institutions (a university or conflict-research centre within each of the two opposing countries, communities or regions); using local contact persons to introduce representatives to senior decision-makers (the global academic network can be useful here); using channels provided by official organizations already involved with the conflict in one generally acceptable role or another (the UN, refugee and relief organizations, peacekeeping forces, local peace groups); or using the contacts made by other mediators or facilitators who have undertaken similar initiatives in the past.

With all or any of these, consideration has to be given to the pros and cons of using such channels to make an initial contact with parties locked in a protracted conflict. The problem becomes less in later stages of a multi-workshop exercise, when the consultants' continuing credibility depends, for better or worse, on past performance. Khrushchev's dictum that there are 'no neutral men' applies equally to local contacts and to international organizations, so that one needs to think carefully about even the most disinterested offers of help, advice or introduction from local institutions and individuals. One consultant once had his credibility completely and forever destroyed by entering an initial meeting with a contact who turned out to be someone perceived as a strong supporter of the political rivals of the decision-maker he wished to contact and convince.

SEE EXERCISE 6.1

6. Initial Talks with Party Representatives.

Once access has been gained, the task becomes much easier, for there is a great deal to say, most of it positive and all of it potentially convincing. Time is invariably short, however, and that constraint can only be overcome by providing a selection of supporting materials, designed to span the range of readability and sophistication. In the nature of their trade, successful political leaders everywhere and at all levels tend to persons of considerable flexibility and vision. Despite the problems of ideological conviction (and the universally held view that one's own conflict is wholly unique and not to be compared with any others whatsoever), skilled politicians tend to be somewhat less sceptical and rather more receptive to problem solving than practitioners from other fields. In our experience, they compare more than favourably in their open mindedness with many academics and with some middle rank bureaucrats.

7. Making the Case for Problem-Solving.

The case to be put consists simply of a description of the CAPS exercise and its basic aim, which is to analyse conflict in the presence and with the assistance of representative of the parties. The leader should be reassured of academic nature of the exercise and informed that an identical approach is being made to the other party or parties. To this can be added some details of the potential of the exercise, which is to explore - informally - possibilities for resolution.

There is a need to stress what problem solving is not. It is not a negotiation; it is not open in any way to the public; it is not simply another manoeuvre in the continual political jousting between the adversaries. In fact, on the surface it is not a commitment to anything *political* at all, merely a commitment to analysis and research.

SEE EXERCISE 6.2

Most importantly, to participate in the process is not to grant recognition to any other party. On this point the persuasive skills of the consultants meet their acid test. In many conflicts a given party is likely to regard at least one of the others as either wholly implacable or offensively illegitimate, or both. Phrases like: 'The only language those people understand comes out of the barrel of a gun !' or ' We will not give in to terrorism' are to be expected.

Such attitudes are fully justifiable, for both emotional and strategic reasons. Conflicts can be, and usually are, harsh and destructive. Sacrifice creates commitment and bitterness. Moreover, the role of a government is to govern, not to temporize. A constitutionally elected president or prime minister cannot be seen to be dealing with 'rebels'. That would violate his mandate. Revolutionaries are subject to similar structural pressures. They are there to change the system, not to make deals with it.

Consultants must respect these points, for they are fundamental. But they do have a clinching argument to make in response. A collaborative problem-solving exercise – because it is simply academic and unofficial - involves neither recognition nor negotiation. It is an unobtrusive framework that enables parties to meet as belligerents, as combatants in a real conflict. The conflict is the problem they have in common and the exercise gives them a chance to begin to solve it. It does not require them to give up their struggle. But it does give them an opportunity to see beyond the mere continuation of struggle and, furthermore, it offers them an opportunity to discover what the opposition might thinking about those same possibilities.

8. Overcoming Tactical Considerations.

Milder problems than that of recognition can arise from the set of tactical considerations with which a leader must properly be concerned. He or she cannot ignore the day-by-day balance of gains and setbacks to his or her ongoing struggle. A leader must be persuaded that to attend a workshop, or, as is more probable, to send an informal representative, concedes nothing in terms of the issues at stake and presents no obstacles to the attaining of an prospective tactical success that he or she may be hoping to achieve, either vis-a-vis the adversaries or within his or her own party.

In dealing with these points, collaborative problem solving has the same advantage over traditional mediation that it enjoys in several other respects. Traditional mediation is crippled by its own logic. To be effective, it must be undertaken by a person who is either *eminent* or *powerful*, but any action by the eminent or powerful has inescapable political implications. If it is effective, it is partisan. It also cannot easily be kept secret.

In contrast, a CAPS exercise has a naturally low profile. The academic setting, the 'research programme', the scholarly reputation of the sponsoring institution, can help to smooth over some, at least, of the jagged political edges. Since the 1970's, reports of 'private diplomacy' (Jackson, 1983; Yarrow 1978; Berman and Johnson, 1977) carried out by respected businessmen, by Quaker representatives and by others, have shown that there are significant benefits to the parties in the conciliating role as a 'go-between' that *non-political* individuals can create for themselves. Problem solving does not employ exactly the same techniques, but it shares some of the same advantages.

Such points can only be introduced as they arise, helped perhaps by the use of supporting arguments. These can include the growing success of problem-solving approaches at other level of society, notably in labour-management disputes, in family or neighbourhood conflicts and in intra- and inter-organizational disputes. Direct reference to what might be called 'higher' levels of success is banned, of course, by the rules of confidentiality, although over the long term that problem should begin to ease and historical cases of successful problem solving initiatives can be mentioned. The low cost of participation in every aspect, from the financial to manpower and the political, can also be heavily stress especially in relation to potential gains.

Another problem that often arises at this stage, and which is somewhat akin to that of recognizing an adversary (and, by implication, the legitimacy of some of his goals) is that leaders have frequently committed themselves to positions and strategies that initially prevent them from holding *any* discussions at all with the other party. Parties in conflict often commit themselves in such a manner as to 'paint themselves into a corner'. Declarations about never negotiating with the enemy, about not considering discussions until certain conditions have been fulfilled, or about carrying on the struggle to the bitter end, are often made at one stage of a conflict to rally support. However, they then become obstacles to dialogue and alternative policies at a later time, when circumstances change and intransigence weakens. The problems posed by such publicly repeated, and sometimes formally written, commitments is lessened, to some degree, by the informal, discreet and non-committing nature of a CAPS exercise, but they never completely disappear. Hence, like more traditional forms of third-party mediation, consultants will sometimes find the need for developing some ingenious *de-committing formula*, which enables parties and the leaders of parties to break free from the constraints on discussions that they have either inherited or imposed upon themselves.

SEE EXERCISE 6.3

In such situations, consultants, like other intermediaries, can typically be helpful in overcoming some of the difficulties the parties themselves experience in constructing a credible and straightforward offer to an adversary - one which can result in a breakthrough in an inevitably slow movement towards serious talks and to which it is easy for an adversary simply to say: 'Yes'. Third parties can serve both as channels of communication and verifiers of one party's offer to another, thus assisting at the start of a de-escalation process and avoiding some of the problems posed when parties' themselves present credible, unilateral proposals for discussions or terms for possible settlement agreements. These often are rejected simply because they come from a mistrusted adversary, rather than because of some inherent flaw in the ideas themselves.

Throughout preliminary discussions with leaders, the novelty and practicality of the exercise can be employed as background arguments. Problem solving is an intellectually stimulating activity, free from coercion, and it should lack any suggestion of the moralism that is sometimes associated with conciliation or reconciliation efforts. Essentially, it is professional and business like and it should be presented as such.

9. Acceptance and Efforts to Control.

As soon as leaders begin to think seriously about the idea participation in the exercise, they are likely to commence negotiations there and then, both with the consultants and, through them, with the other parties. They tend, for example, suggest that topics a, b and c should be high on the agenda, while x, y and z are ruled out of order from the start. Indeed, it is often plainly stated. if x, y or z are put down on the preliminary agenda, *they will not take part!*

This has to be resisted. Collaborative analytical problem solving consists involves untrammelled analysis, wide ranging discussions and a joint exploration of a common problem, not the restricted activity of bargaining from previously entrenched positions. Official negotiation *might* take place later or separately, at the parties' own initiative, but not within the CAPS workshop.

One common specified condition of acceptance is, however, to be welcomed. It usually takes the form: 'We will attend if the other party does.' If the consultants have planned the exercise correctly, they will be able to respond that the agreement has already been secured, or is about to be. In an ideal problem-exercise, approaches will have been made to the two or more parties simultaneously. The conditional acceptance signals at least an interim success. The consultants can now return home or proceed to their next port of call to carry out a similar procedure on the leaders of the other parties involved - and begin serious preparations for the first workshop.

On their return, or even before this, if an opportunity arises while they are still in direct touch with the decision-makers who have given verbal approval, however tentative, it is often helpful (it) try to obtain a written commitment from top leaders. This needs to include some statement indicating support (at least in principle) for the idea of a problem-solving exercise and for their side's informal participation therein. Such a document, it must be stressed, will be quite informal and kept wholly confidential.

The very first preparatory task therefore involves sending a formal letter of invitation to the leaders who already have been directly contacted (and alerted to the fact that normal exercise procedures involve sending such a letter). The letter will be at once a means of keeping in touch with busy leaders, another opportunity to outline the nature of the proposed exercise, a formal invitation for support and participation, and a method of marginally increasing leaders' commitment and lending their personal support to the process. Written commitments are usually more committing than are oral commitments.

SEE EXERCISE 6.4

Leaders usually reply briefly and in the affirmative, but on occasions they may have had second thoughts, or events may have occurred in the course of the conflict that make it more difficult for them to give easy assent to their party's participation in an exercise, no matter how informal or low-key.

(One scholar practitioner has written about how his particular workshop plans were disrupted by an attempted intra-party coup and the subsequent invasion of the country that was the site of the protracted civil strife by the army of a neighbouring patron. Disruptions of this magnitude seem, however, to be rare.)

Occasionally, leaders reply with a flat, if regretted negative, in which case the whole process of contact and persuasion has to be repeated at a later date and in, hopefully, more appropriate circumstances. Rather more frequently, leaders may use this occasion as an opportunity to reassure themselves further by again imposing conditions for their support and their party's participation.

SEE EXERCISE 6.5

Again, it is important to maintain the principle that *the consultants must control their own process*. This principle must always be emphasized, firmly but politely, although it is also the case that leaders' requests, stipulations and conditions must be considered carefully, and accommodated if it is possible to do so without damaging the basic integrity of the problem-solving process. Often, this can be a tricky task but once it has been accomplished to the satisfaction of consultants and the leaders the parties in conflict, it is possible to move on to the next stage the exercise - preparing for the initial workshop.

EXERCISE 6.1: Channels for Making Contact.

Background Discussion.

'Unofficial' persons or organizations who wish to undertake intermediary roles as mediators, facilitators or consultants often confront problems of access to leaders of parties in conflict not usually faced by officials from governments, diplomatic services or inter-governmental organizations. Occasionally, the practice of simply turning up unannounced and asking for an appointment with the relevant leader or government minister will work. Often it won't. More frequently, 'Track Two' practitioners make use of personal or institutional contacts to obtain - usually brief - access to key decision-makers to present their proposals and make their request for approval and support.

However, the use of such informal personal and institutional channels can present its own dilemmas, for it is seldom the case that local individuals or institutions have not themselves taken positions on, or made pronouncements about the conflict. The saying about there being 'no neutral men' applies with equal force to local personalities and organizations, particularly in the perceptions of rival leaders involved in a protracted and deep-rooted conflict. To an outsider, being introduced by a local religious leader, a university professor or a successful businessman may involve minimal bias. To insiders, the use of Dr X or Organization Y as a channel or a patron may indicate that those being introduced are likely to have particular views of the conflict, support particular viewpoints or be trying to achieve particular outcomes while undermining the possibility of others.

The choice of 'who one goes in with' can, thus, often be a difficult one. An early error can needlessly antagonize contacts in the early stages of a process, as well as causing harm in the later stages of an ongoing process.

Exercise Scenario

YOU are members of an independent research and consultancy Centre for Conflict Resolution, attached to the University of Umea in Sweden. For some time, your Centre has been monitoring a protracted civil war in the West African country of Zandia, with a view to launching an intermediary initiative involving a series of problem-solving workshops. It has established a Planning Committee to design such an exercise once an appropriate opportunity presents itself. You are the members of that Committee.

It seems clear that the core parties to the conflict are represented by the officially recognized Government of the Republic, which appears to be in control of the capital, most of the main towns and about two thirds of the rest of the country; and a coalition of insurgent groups from the remaining third of the country, known as the Azania Liberation Front (ALF). The latter are rumoured to be considering the establishment of a rival 'Interim Government of National Unity', in a neighbouring country.

There currently appears to be a lull in the fighting, and the Committee feels that a preliminary and exploratory approach might be made, as simultaneously as possible, to the two sides, mainly to see whether either or both might be willing to consider taking part in a problem-solving exercise.

It is generally agreed on your Committee that both parties will have to be approached simultaneously with a (roughly) identical proposal. At the present moment discussion has turned to how best to approach the parties, more particularly the recognized, legal Government in the capital, which is bound to be highly sensitive about suggestions it should talk with '... a set of murderous rebels...' to quote a recent statement by the Zandian President.

This initial approach is bound to be a delicate business and the means used will undoubtedly affect the Government's response, as well as that of the ALF.

There seem to be four possible avenues, each having unspecified advantages and disadvantages. Your Committee is thus discussing the following options:

- (1) A direct approach to the President of the Republic himself by sending a small mission from the Centre to outline the proposal and seek support and approval.
- (2) An approach through an ex-doctoral student of the University, who is now the country's Deputy Foreign Minister, is known to be a rather unpopular hardliner within the Government and is clearly regarded as a hawk by the insurgents.
- (3) An approach through the Vice-Rector of the National University of Zandia, who has not previously had any contacts with the University of Umea, but who is known to be a personal friend of the Zandian President.
- (4) An approach through the Swedish field director of 'Relief and Rehabilitation', a European wide, Brussels-based humanitarian organization that has been active in famine relief and resettlement work in the country, but which has been criticized both by members of the Government for '...becoming politically involved in the struggle' and by some insurgent leaders for '...acting to undermine revolutionary commitment' in disputed areas.
- (5) Any alternative channels that might be available and promising.

Exercise Task

In your role as the Centre's Planning Committee:

- (1) Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using any of the above channels as an initial approach to the Government side in this dispute and make a preliminary recommendation to your Centre's Director regarding the best approach to be used by the Centre (justifying your choice clearly and concisely).

- (2) In your recommendation, indicate what additional information about the various channels would be needed before any final decision about the best channel is made (i.e. What else do you need to know about any of the suggested 'avenues' before you can make a better-informed choice?).
- (3) In your recommendation, be careful to make an evaluation of the effects the use of your chosen channel is likely to have on the insurgent leaders, and how this choice might affect the way in which the Centre should subsequently approach them.

EXERCISE 6.2: Introducing the Proposal.

Background Discussion

Once access has actually been attained, whether key decision-makers will approve of and support any problem-solving exercise is frequently very much affected by the manner in which the proposal is initially presented to them by field representatives of the consultant organization.

It is often a difficult task to generate interest from, convey credibility to, and arouse interest in the project from busy and inevitably sceptical leaders of parties in conflict. They will want to know how this proposal differs from other attempts to produce a disadvantageous (to them) settlement of the conflict, initiated by well-meaning, but essentially ignorant 'do-gooders'. Why should they bother to take this seriously ?

It is, therefore, necessary to convey quickly to busy decision-makers that the proposal is realistic, credible, low cost, innovative and worth a little of their, or their underlings', time spent in at least exploring the possibilities on offer.

At initial meetings with top decision-makers, consultants will usually find that they - just - have time to make a brief introductory statement outlining their proposal and hopefully interesting the listening decision-maker enough to make him or her ask further questions about the proposal and its likely advantages and disadvantages. Often the leader's response will take the form of explaining how the proposed exercise: (a) is just' like several already suggested or even tried; and (b) will not work - usually because of the unreasonableness of the other side.

However, such reactions do indicate some level of interest, and should be taken as providing an opportunity to 'sell' the idea of the exercise by:

- (1) dealing with questions and objections;
- (2) conveying the sense that this is a process that has been tried in other conflicts - with some success - and thus is not wholly new or untried; and
- (3) reassuring the listener that the exercise is not an attempt by outsiders to impose any kind of unwanted settlement on the parties.

This second stage of probing and questioning by a decision-maker does, however, depend upon catching his or her interest in the opening moments of a meeting. An introductory statement is thus an important element in developing *credibility* for the consultants themselves, for their parent institution and for the process being proposed.

Exercise Scenario

Your Centre in the University of Umea has managed to obtain a short meeting with the President of the West African country of Zandia, where a protracted civil war has been raging between the President's Government (strongly supported in the south and west of the Republic) and a coalition of insurgent groups from the north and east, who have recently established an 'Interim Government of National Unity' in the neighbouring capital of the Samaale Democratic Republic.

The President is on a brief visit to Stockholm to seek aid and political support from the Swedish Government, and is obviously busy and pressed for time. Since you have been ushered into his room and sat down at a table with the President and his Personal Secretary there have already been two brief interruptions, and there will obviously be more.

The President looks at his watch, apologizes for the interruptions, but states firmly that he must leave in half an hour for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs ...

Exercise Task

Prepare, rehearse and get ready to deliver a brief opening statement for the President, which presents in an interesting and credible manner a proposal for a possible series of problem-solving exercises involving the parties to the conflict within the President's country.

You need to think about what information it would be necessary to convey succinctly to a political leader who confronts an insurgency (which he and his supporters will clearly regard as an illegal rebellion) and who may - or may not - be looking for a non-military means of finding a solution - but obviously for one that presents minimal danger to his own position or that of his government.

You should also recall that you and your Centre are inevitably an 'unknown quantity' to this particular decision-maker, who may or may not, let you deliver your statement without interruption.

What do you think is essential to 'get across' in these opening moments?

Make your presentation to the President as best you can. Do you also plan to have a short document to leave with the President? If so, what does it say?

EXERCISE 6.3: The De-commitment Function; Providing Fig Leaves for Parties.

Background Discussion.

Frequently, parties in protracted conflicts put themselves into a position where even meeting and talking with an adversary is difficult. Usually, this is because leaders have publicly bound themselves not to undertake certain specified actions. This often involves a public commitment never to hold negotiations with the enemy, or not to undertake talks until the adversary has clearly met certain preconditions. This usually puts that enemy in the position of responding by publicly stating, in its turn, that it has no intention of being blackmailed into making concessions before talks have even occurred !

In a CAPS exercise such commitments can usually be avoided by emphasizing that the exercise proposed cannot be interpreted as 'negotiations' or even 'talks' in any formal sense, but is an exercise in academic analysis, which may provide some new insights into the conflict and perhaps throw up some new options for a resolution.

On occasions, however, it is necessary for the consultants to suggest ways in which leaders might be able to 'de-commit' themselves from previous announcements that they will never talk to adversaries under any circumstances or until the adversary has abandoned violence, or declared a truce, or admitted past 'errors'. Only then can agreement to attend be forthcoming and the planned workshop proceed.

It should be emphasized that, if consultants do get involved in the process of de-commitment, or providing a 'fig leaf' for leaders who are 'boxed in', part of that process may well involve a preliminary check with leaders of the other side as to whether the chosen formula for de-commitment is acceptable to them. Being involved in this particular 'pre-negotiation' process can be dangerous for the consultants and should be undertaken with great caution lest they begin to appear partisan advocates for one side.

Exercise Scenario

In the early 1940s, political power in the southern European country of Lusitania was seized by a military coup, headed by General Joano de Silva. The subsequent military *junta* proceeded to establish a centralized, single-party state, modelled upon that established by Benito Mussolini and the Fascist Party in Italy. Resistance to the junta continued for a number of years, especially in the border region of Etruria, which had a historical tradition of independence, based upon cultural and linguistic differences from the remainder of the country. Resistance was put down ruthlessly by the central government, which maintained a formal 'state of siege' in the province until the late 1970s. In spite of this policy, the Etrurian nationalist party (the PNE) continued in opposition from exile, while POME, its military wing, managed to launch occasional assaults on military forces and the civil guard stationed in Etruria.

In 1982, the rule of General da Silva's successors was overthrown in a popular and general uprising throughout Lusitania, with key sections of the army backing the uprising. Elections were held, returning a left wing coalition dominated by the Lusitanian Social Democratic Alliance (ASDL). The new government's first task was to draft a new constitution, which it duly completed in 1985, subsequently subjecting the scheme to a successful, nationwide referendum. In 1986 the ASDL government was returned to power in elections held under the 1985 Constitution, although with a reduced majority.

In Etruria the 1982 Revolution was generally welcomed and many of the old PNE leaders returned from exile, although certain POME hardliners continued with 'the military struggle', at a much lower level of violence. Negotiations took place with the ASDL over Etruria's political aspirations, and in the 1985 Constitution Etruria was granted the status of an autonomous region containing four provinces under an overall regional government. The Etrurian Regional Government was granted a considerable degree of autonomy, although responsibility for the maintenance of law and order remained vested in the central government.

The PNE split over whether to accept the new autonomy arrangements, the bulk of the leadership arguing that they safeguarded Etrurian rights and way of life, other 'hardliners' holding out for complete independence. The latter, who became known as 'the Ultras' went into exile again, vowing to carry on the 'sacred struggle' through POME, which they

duly did, mounting bomb attacks on the military and police and kidnapping prominent individuals in Etruria and the country at large.

The 'Constitutionalists' remained to participate in the new Lusitanian political system but in the 1989 regional elections a breakaway group of younger politicians formed a new party, the Etrurian Popular Alliance (APE) to contest seats for the Regional Assembly. The current Regional Government is formed by a coalition of PNE and ASDL ministers, with APE and several small parties in opposition.

In early 1990, a number of 'Ultras' were amnestied by the Lusitanian central government and returned to Etruria to form a new political party to agitate for a revision of the 1985 constitution 'through non-violent and constitutional means'. This Party for True Autonomy in Etruria (PAVE) clearly retains close connections with the 'Ultras' in exile and with POME, and has been accused by PNE leaders of 'being as distant from POME as fleas are from their dog'. However, it clearly has considerable support in some areas of Etruria as it won seats in recent provincial elections and returned two Members to the European Parliament in Strasbourg during the 1993 Euro-elections.

PAVE has recently begun to call for talks within Etruria concerning a revision of the 1982 Constitution in the direction of 'greater freedom' and an end to violent struggle. The response of the main constitutionalist parties has been to hold a conference on 'Arrangements for Peace and Normalization in Etruria' and to sign an Agreement (called the 'Alva Accords') committing themselves NOT to discuss constitutional changes - or anything else - with 'elements closely associated with the current campaign of murder, violence and terror in the country' - a clear reference to PAVE.

Exercise Task

Your university Institute has decided that conditions might be appropriate to initiate a problem-solving exercise involving the parties to the Etrurian conflict, even though the current level of violence shows little sign of diminishing, particularly with national elections approaching at the end of the current year.

Through the good offices of a friend on the staff of the Bishop of Etruria, you spend an hour explaining the project to the President of the Etrurian Autonomous Region, a member of PNE and head of the PNE/ASDL coalition government. The President listens politely - if a little sceptically - to the idea, pointing out that the only real problem lies in the unreasonable goals and behaviour of the Ultras and POME -now, fortunately, 'on the run' both as individuals and as a movement.

To your suggestion of a workshop involving all the constitutional parties (including PAVE), he answers that he feels that would be impossible, given the commitments his political party - and hence the Regional Government - have made to the other parties and 'to the people of Etruria and the Government of Lusitania ...'. He suggests that you talk with his chef de cabinet and main political adviser about whether there might be any way in which 'the kind of exercise you suggest' could take place without violating such clear commitments or, he implies, even by finding some way round them.

'Personally', says the President, 'I feel we should always be willing to talk to everybody who can be reasonable - but promises are promises!'

The chef de cabinet is more sceptical than his political chief and provides details of the commitments made solemnly and publicly in the Alva Accords (see below). He suggests you might care to return by the end of the week with some suggestions for how signatories might 'justifiably and with honour be able to meet PAVE members... in one of your - what do you call them - workshops?' He ushers you out of the President's suite of offices, obviously without much hope that you will come up with any reasonable and realistic formula. You leave with the impression that - perhaps - he does not really share the President's feeling that one should talk with anyone reasonable.

Extracts from The Alva Accords: An Agreement for the Restoration of Normality and Peace to Etruria

'...Even today, ten years after the approval of the new national Constitution, certain people, going against the wishes clearly and repeatedly expressed by their society, continue to have recourse to violence as a means of imposing alternative political models which have not only failed so far to be capable of embodiment in a clear political proposal, but have also been shown to be a minority view in the elections held.

Furthermore, the unlawful and reprehensible use of terrorism, besides representing the most dramatic expression of intolerance and exclusivism, an unacceptable contempt for the wishes of the people and an assault against fundamental human rights, is continuing to bring in its wake an accumulation of disastrous consequences for Etrurian society, distorting and damaging it to a considerable extent from the moral, social, political and economic points of view ...

... we call upon those who still continue to resort to violence or seek to legitimize it, to respect the will of the people, to abandon their arms and to participate in institutional activity, by which means they will be lawfully entitled to defend their own political view by peaceful and democratic means ...

Now, therefore, we, the undersigned parties, approve the following Accord ...

... In view of the fact that the dispute that has arisen in our society between the majority of us who have opted for democratic and lawful ways and means and those who continue to resort to violence can only be settled by the cessation of that violence, we call upon those who continue to resort to violence to have regard to the majority will of

their people and renounce it as an instrument of political action, and also to join in the common task of seeking ... the most suitable ways of giving satisfaction to the aspirations shared by Etrurian society ...

... If the requisite circumstances arise for a negotiated cessation of violence, based on the clear will to bring the same to an end and on unequivocal attitudes enabling that conclusion to be drawn, we are in favour of procedures being established for discussions to be held between the competent state authorities and those who decide to abandon violence, respecting at all times the un-renounceable democratic principle that political questions must be resolved only through the lawful representatives of the will of the people ...

... In order to foster constant dialogue amongst the various political movements, to extend ways of enabling those who do not today accept the majority will of the Etrurian people to be incorporated into society, and to ensure the implementation of this Accord, we request that the Regional Assembly should continue to preside over the process designed to achieve a full return to normality in this Country...'

EXERCISE 6.4: Obtaining Formal Approval.

Background Discussion

Even after having talked directly with the leaders of key parties to the conflict and obtained their verbal approval of the exercise, it is usually a good idea to set out the nature of the project for which you seek approval, briefly and in writing; and to try to obtain a written response from the leaders at least to the effect that they do not oppose the holding of the workshop or workshop series.

The purpose of this procedure is partly:

- (1) to reiterate the details of your proposal and to reinforce what you have presented verbally to busy leaders;
- (2) to explain further and, perhaps more clearly, what you have only briefly touched upon in conversation;
- (3) to maintain contacts with leaders during the preparations stage of the workshop, which may be long-drawn out; and
- (4) to obtain a more definite commitment on the part of leaders who face an ever-changing situation concerning the conflict and its intra-party effects, and whose tendency with anything unknown and uncertain is usually to minimize risk especially to their own position.

As a rule of thumb, it is usually important to 'clear' the idea of holding a workshop, at least in principle, with all parties and factions who could sabotage it. This ideal may not be possible in many situations, however, so that one has to make do with a formal 'approval in principle' from leaders of the parties actually invited to attend the first workshop.

The letter should be a formal request to leaders to agree in principle to the holding of the workshop, and an invitation to nominate possible representatives to attend the workshop. It should also re-explain the details of the exercise and provide reassuring information to the leader to encourage participation.

A good set of principles for composing such an invitation might be those underlying Roger Fisher's conception of a 'Yes-able Proposition'.

Exercise Scenario

You have, after a lot of time and trouble, managed to talk directly with the President of Zandia while he was on a visit to Stockholm; and with the Secretary-General of the Azania Liberation Front, in the capital of a neighbouring African country.

Much to your surprise, the Secretary-General proved interested in, and enthusiastic about the idea of holding an initial problem-solving workshop on the Zandian conflict, plus the possibility of follow-up workshops. She was concerned about the site of the meetings, and to some degree about security for ALF members attending the workshops but said that these were minor matters '... with which I am sure you can deal ...' (The Secretary-General attended Oxford University and has a degree in English Literature !)

The Zandian President was less enthusiastic and kept insisting that there should be no question of any formal negotiation at '... this meeting of yours ...'. You are not sure that he has quite grasped the essential nature of the approach, the planned exercise, or the details of your actual proposal, and he seemed somewhat uneasy about the fact that you were prepared to approach ALF leadership directly after having talked to him.

Exercise Task

At the end of each meeting, you promised both leaders that the Director of your Centre would shortly write a formal letter to them, outlining the nature of the exercise that was being planned and seeking their agreement, in principle, as well as their verbal support for the process.

Your Director has asked you and the Planning Committee to draft appropriate and reassuring letters to the two leaders. Do so.

EXERCISE 6.5: Controlling the Process.

Background Discussion

In some types of third-party interventions, part of the overall procedure is to offer the parties, or the participants in a particular problem-solving exercise, the choice of which specific procedures to use; or a major part in the design of a specific process to be used in their case.

In contrast to this, the use of CAPS exercises and workshops to deal with protracted and deep-rooted conflict emphasizes that the consultants *maintain overall control over the process*, even though the latter usually consists of an extremely flexible and adaptive set of procedures.

The third party must take responsibility, and hence any blame, for the process. Credit for success must always go to the parties and participants. Therefore, it is important to keep overall control of that process, and this involves being clear about what is, and what is not, left in the hands of the parties.

One of the things that is NOT left to party decision-makers is the determination of who can and who cannot attend a workshop. This issue should not become a matter for bargaining, if this can be prevented or avoided.

Exercise Scenario

Your Umea Centre has been successful in contacting the warring parties in the Republic of Zandia and in persuading both the President of the country and the Secretary-General of the Azanian Liberation Front that the participation of 'representatives of the parties in conflict' in a series of problem-solving workshops might move the conflict nearer a mutually acceptable solution. Both were initially sceptical, and the President was particularly worried about any implied recognition that ALF participation in such a workshop might imply.

However, both agreed to approve the exercise in principle, to suggest possible participants from their party and not to place obstacles in the path of the exercise. On returning from your field trip, formal letters to both leaders, seeking their written approval in principle, were sent to Zandia and (via the capital of the neighbouring Samaale Republic) to the ALF.

Both leaders have now replied to your invitations. Somewhat to your surprise, in the light of your conversations with him, the President, while accepting the idea of the problem-solving exercise in principle, stipulates that:

- (1) He wishes to select Zandian participants himself and to issue formal invitations from the Presidential palace;
- (2) He will not permit any members of the ALF Council (the movements governing body) to participate in any of the workshops. If they do, he will ban Zandian participation;
- (3) He would like representatives of the Secretariat of the Organization of African Unity to be present as 'observers' at the first workshop.

The letter from the ALF Secretary-General is briefer but includes a strong suggestion that representatives of the Government of the Samaale Republic (a neighbouring country that has been strongly supportive of the ALF and its struggle) should also be invited as '... a party with vital interests in the outcome of our dispute with the illegitimate Zandian Government...'

Exercise Task

What do you do about these requests and stipulations, and how do you respond to the letters from the President and the Secretary-General ?

Summarize your suggestions, and the reasons for them, in a Memorandum from the Planning Committee to the Director of your Centre, and include two draft letters in reply to the President and Secretary-General.

Do you think any additional action to this written response is necessary? If so, what would you recommend?

CHAPTER 7.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE FIRST WORKSHOP

In common with other forms of intermediary process (mediation, conciliation, dialogues), a problem-solving *workshop* is usually triangular in structure. It brings together representatives of the adversary parties (the *participants*) in the presence of a third party (the *panel* of facilitators). There the resemblance ends. The problem-solving approach specifies that all parties must be present in the same place at the same time; message carrying by the third party is not sufficient. The talks must extend for a sufficiently long period to permit genuinely intensive discussion, which means that several days, or even weeks, may be necessary. The setting for the meeting must be one that is conducive to a thorough analysis, which implies that great care must be given to a whole range of details concerning the physical arrangements and their institutional context. Above all, the third-party 'panel' is a crucial element. In the problem-solving approach. It usually consists predominantly of academic researchers. Their selection and preparation is no less important than the invitations to the warring parties. Together, all these points imply that, to mount an effective problem-solving exercise, there must be a substantial background of administrative support.

1. The Organizational Background

Ideally, the administrative structure would be efficient, smooth running, adequately funded and expertly managed - in a word, professional. In fact, most of the problem-solving exercises undertaken by the Centre for the Analysis of Conflict and by other individuals and groups in the 1970s and 1980s were not professional at all, in the administrative sense. They were amateur operations, usually made possible only by the persistent enthusiasm of a few academics working on a part-time basis. Inevitably, technical hitches occurred, despite the flexibility and hard work of the secretarial and other supporting services that universities sometimes make available to their faculty members. In some ways a university environment is physically and socially attractive to the working participants. Many enjoy meeting students and recapturing the flavour of their own college days. But the need for the academic sponsors to fit their own timetables to the availability of participants, which is often subject to last-minute change, can be a serious problem.

Efficiency is, nevertheless, essential particularly in relation to one function during the run-up to the workshop: communication with the parties. Letters, faxes and e-mails must be answered immediately, phone calls made whatever the difficulties reaching the person requires, additional field trips made as and when changes in the conflict situation make them necessary. The ratio of time spent on preparatory efforts and actual 'workshop time' is often very high indeed, and there is no way in which this aspect of preparation can safely be cut down. The efficient flow of communication between party representatives and consultants is vital.

To achieve this in case after case in future, which is what must happen if the world's conflicts are not to continue to fester as they mostly have in the past, problem solving needs to be institutionalized. The institutionalization will need to develop within inherent logic of the approach, which requires that most elusive of qualities, true neutrality. Only in this way can *credibility* grow, so that the institution becomes permanently viable.

Neutrality, in this sense, means that an inspection of institution's previous record will not reveal any pattern of impact or effects that would allow a prediction to be made about a future outcome, other than general usefulness. Parties to any conflict are accustomed to deciding whether to go to court or to arbitration on the basis of a prediction that the result will be to *their* advantage. A sure sign of this is where a particular organization is repeatedly called in by one 'side' to a continual pattern of disputes.

However, it is important to make every effort to maintain credibility of both the consultants' parent organization and the process itself, and both of these can frequently be undermined by a failure to maintain commitments that have been made during initial approach to the parties. A particular problem is that of maintaining the essential *confidentiality* of the process, and it is a problem because, frequently, the parties themselves, or one of them, see an advantage in making it known that contacts are occurring, discussions planned or meetings taking place. This breaking of confidentiality is something that must be anticipated and prepared for, given the promises of discretion and confidentiality provided to parties and individuals relying on their maintenance.

SEE EXERCISE 7.1

However, even while maintaining the necessary confidentiality, the amateur exercises that have led to the production of this Handbook can claim some measure of success. Their results and, in some cases, resolutions have been acceptable to all parties, nondirective and non-coercive. But it is also the case that their scale has been tiny and their achievements fragile. Their significance is only that they have shown what *could* be done. And it has to be faced that conflict resolution by problem solving is non-dramatic, incremental, slow and modest in every way. Change these properties, and the method will fail. And some of the world's chronic problems will continue.

It is not yet clear what form the perfectly functioning organizational structure would take; time and testing will have to determine that. But the image originally formed among pioneering conflict analysts was of a structure rather similar to that of a business management consulting group. There would be a team of qualified scholars as consultants in charge, supported by a secretariat with its own premises and necessary facilities. The team would be linked to the larger world of scholarship in relevant fields, perhaps with movement of individuals back and forth between the consulting group and the universities.

Each conflict analysis and resolution organization would have it) be generally acceptable to governments and to various international institutions, but not directly sponsored by them. The nature of any linkage between public authority and private consulting group would, therefore, raise ultra-sensitive problems, with many aspects to be worked out. And, of course, finance would be required, which constitutes a separate discussion.

Once a successful programme of institutionalization has been established, one issue will be raised in an acute form; the source of the financial support for any problem-solving institution. Inevitably, the view held by potential clients or users of both the problem-solving process and the institution practising it will be affected by what the users will see as one highly significant influence on the nature of the service provided: who controls those purse strings.

Even in the activities to date, it has been found that the issue of the source of operating funds is an important one, and on which frequently affects parties' initial reception of a approach and likely success in initiating a problem-solving exercise. 'Who is paying you for all this?' is always one of the first questions asked by leaders of parties in conflict when approached by members of the Centre. It is a question that has to be answered directly and promptly. In past exercises we have answered, accurately, that much of the funding for administrative and logistical support comes directly from the university while other charitable and educational foundations interested promoting peace and reconciliation, prominently the Society Friends, have given their support on an exercise-by-exercise basis. However, the question has alerted us to the dangers of being supported from government funds (which will give the impression that any proposal for a problem-solving exercise is merely another, if more subtle, attempt to further national interests) or by funding from foundations or other sources that have been associated, however innocently or indirectly, with activities that one or other of the parties to that particular conflict would regard as biased.

The issue of funds regarded as 'tainted' and funding source regarded as biased or manipulative is one that will arise in an even stronger form as the movement towards the institutionalization of conflict resolution and problem solving achieves some success, as began to happen in the 1980s and 1990s. To take one obvious example, if the United States Institute for Peace were to become associated with a problem-solving exercise, is it likely that USIP will, at least, be regarded as anything other than a branch of the US Government (which, of course, it is) necessarily pursuing America's interests? How might funding from Japanese or Australian sources, however disinterested, be regarded by parties to a conflict in Indonesia or the Philippines? What source of funding would be regarded as untainted by parties to any of the complex, interlocking conflicts in the Middle East?

Two major questions are posed by this issue of funding and there is no easy answer to either of them. The first is how those supplying funds for a conflict resolution 'institute' or 'bureau' will be viewed by potential clients, and what might be done to avoid the transference of any negative views from the funding source to the 'bureau'. The second, which we have not discussed because we have been fortunate in not encountering it, is to what extent reliance upon a major source of funding to establish a bureau will, indeed, affect the activities of that bureau - the cases it handles, its freedom of action, the type of outcome it might seek, its ability to take up a neutral stance in conflicts where popular feeling is strongly on one side of the dispute.

The only guideline derived from experience so far is for consultants to be extremely wary of their funding sources, to eschew government funding and to be completely open with parties in conflict about 'where the money comes from'. Any attempt at concealment of sources on the grounds that this might prejudice parties' reactions, followed by subsequent revelation, would be disastrous for the process, and not just for that particular exercise. The effects of Project Camelot should be kept firmly in mind.

2. The Setting of the Workshop

Wherever possible, consultants should be able to carry with them information about the what, when and where of the prospective workshop when they first journey to meet the potential party representatives; both the nature of the workshop and its context must be clearly worked out. This 'setting' of a workshop has importance on two levels. On the higher level, symbolic significance must be created. To do this, a meeting should be held under some distinguished institutional umbrella. The umbrella of a university can be valuable in conveying the sort of image that will encourage the parties to begin to think in problem-solving terms; research instead of polemics; analysis in place of rhetoric; communication rather than bargaining. The auspices of a known centre of learning can help to underline the distinction between a slanging match of many years' duration and a productive seminar which, in a few days, might open up options and possibilities not previously thought of.

On a practical level, the setting must be chosen in a way that fits the prescription implicit in one of the few safe generalizations known to social science: *that people tend, on the whole, to act out whatever role is appropriate to the situation*. If the situation is well designed, the role playing will be that which fits the problem solving method.

This means that the chosen *locale* should be physically apart from the location of the conflict and free of any association with any party to it. It means that *insulation* from the conflict is to be sought, so that the participants may feel themselves to be on an intellectual 'island'. The object is to find not merely the traditional mediator's 'neutral ground', but a setting in which the exercise seems remote - although not too remote - from the real world of international or intra-national conflict.

Often, finding an appropriate site is not an easy matter and the search for one is complicated by the fact that many countries will have taken a political position on the conflict under analysis, so that suggestions that a workshop might be held in country X often meet with the reply, from one or other party, that X has taken pro-adversary position or made negative comments - and hence that site would be inappropriate. Greece and Turkey would clearly be inappropriate places to hold a workshop on the Cyprus conflict, but so might Britain, a party to the Zurich Agreement and with unpopular military bases on the island, or the United States. On the other hand, we have found that part of making workshop participants feel comfortable and giving them a sense of safety and security (as well as 'distance'

from their conflict) involves putting them in a setting that feels culturally similar and somewhat familiar, perhaps with a common local language. The ideal is to create a sense of 'being at home' while not exactly being home; and mixing things familiar with others less familiar, yet interesting. Thus, in a curious way, a Cypriot workshop held in Britain would provide both sets of participants from the island with a sense of familiarity and some security, together with the important sense of being temporarily isolated from the day-to-day events of the conflicts on the island.

If these features can be achieved, they create an important *psychological boundary* between the workshop and the normal activities by which the participants engage in their conflict. The effect is that they are less likely to be accused of 'politicking' by their colleagues upon their return home, and they are less likely actually to engage in it. These considerations rule out a government office, a political headquarters, a court of law, an embassy, or even a metropolitan hotel. Instead, the library of a rural conference centre, the meeting room of a research institute, the boardroom of a philanthropic foundation or possibly the committee room of a famous hospital can all provide both the atmosphere and the connotations sought: professional concern, disinterested analysis, depth of discourse, seclusion, respect for information - in short, prestige of a non-political kind.

As a part of preparing an appropriate setting for the talks, the needs of those about to attend must also be kept in mind. Although there have been increasing opportunities for a few individuals to participate in workshops, dialogues or problem-solving exercises, it is unlikely that the participants in the planned workshop will have any very clear idea about what sort of a process they are about to participate in. Each may be puzzled and slightly apprehensive about what, and whom, they will confront in the forthcoming exercise. This is especially true in workshops that bring together parties that have been engaged in protracted and violent struggle leading to the demonization of the adversary and painfully high levels of hatred and mistrust. We have found it useful in past workshops, especially those that are the first of a planned series, to provide participants with some indication of the procedures in which they will be involved and of their own likely role in a problem-solving exercise. Thus, the invitations to individual participants have often contained some details about the forthcoming workshop, expressed in a positive and reassuring manner, but not minimizing the problems or the difficulties of the exercise for all those involved. Composing such an outline is often difficult, as the sensitivities and sensibilities of all those attending must be taken into account, and a balance struck between conveying the difficulties that will be confronted but also the excitement and the potential 'pay-offs' from involvement. Nonetheless, this is an unavoidable part of preparing for the workshop.

SEE EXERCISE 7.2

3. Assembling the Panel

Whatever the organizational background and physical facilities for a workshop, no progress can be made without an effective third party – a facilitating panel to form the catalyst for interaction between the parties. Panelists have to be selected with deliberate care and they will need some degree of preparation for each workshop to which they are invited. They must possess certain personal and professional qualities. They must possess relevant knowledge. And they must know precisely what to expect when they attend the workshop, including what is expected of them.

3.1. The Qualities of the Panelists.

The personal and professional qualities needed can be separated into those which are necessary for participation in all workshops, and those that need to be considered in relation to the sensitivities of the parties within any particular workshop.

Generally desirable qualities all stem from the problem-solving theme, whereby conflict resolution, if it is to occur, is the product of thoughtful analysis. Every member of the panel, therefore, must be qualified, and seen to be so, in a relevant discipline. Institutional affiliation is, perhaps, the clearest indication of this; an imposing panel can include 'names' from several major universities, or reputable intermediary institutions. 'Names' in any other sense should be avoided, especially those of government 'in-and-outers'. However eminent a person may be in scholarly terms, he or she will frequently damage a workshop if he has seen recent government service, or similar service in support of any political group. His or her neutrality would be in question. Age and experience are also factors contributing to the professional aura of the panel. In many cultures, an experienced elder is often able to command respect by his very presence, whereas a panel comprised exclusively of 'whizz-kids' might have difficulty in creating the desired atmosphere.

But qualifications, age and experience all take second place to personality in the task of drawing up a list of panelists. The consultants must be people who know how to *listen*, and beyond that, know how to *hear* while they are listening. Intelligent, *constructive* interpretation of a statement is absolutely essential. This constitutes the greatest single drawback in an exclusive reliance of the approach on academic personnel. Academics are mostly people who earn their living by talking, often indeed by talking *down* to an audience. So the organizers must search for those relatively rare scholars who have a genuine commitment to a supportive, diagnostic, non-directive approach to group discussion. Such people can be found, and the experience of a single workshop will automatically expose an error of judgement in making a choice.

Within these general guidelines, a panel must be chosen to fit a *particular* workshop. Its composition must take at least some account of the prejudices and the delegational responsibilities of the party representatives - the participants. Whether or not the actual participants are themselves touchy or heavily biased, they are required to act on behalf of groups which may have distinct rules, habits and values of a cultural, racial, ideological or religious kind. Certainly, they will have overt political sensitivities, or there would be no need for a workshop. All of these factors

must be checked beforehand, and judgements must be made whether any one of them might cause a prospective panel member to be regarded as unacceptable. In practice, the effect of this is that many otherwise suitable panelists will be ruled out of a given workshop, not through any fault of their own, but through some inherent property like nationality, race or gender. We have often found it to be the unfortunate case that the perceived positions or biases of governments on particular conflicts 'rub off' on their nationals, who thus become identified with these, and are thus unacceptable as panel members. On one past occasion a great deal of time and effort had to be devoted to smoothing over the hostility evinced by Argentine participants towards United States panelists arising from the US government's ostensibly 'neutral' stance in a conflict where Argentine opinion had looked for US backing. Such problems are not infrequent and should be anticipated.

SEE EXERCISE 7.3

It is worth noting that the judgements to be made here touch upon a fundamental problem in all the applied social sciences; *values and their role in political actions*. The organizers may be tempted deliberately to choose, or perhaps merely connive at the choice of, a person who in their moral judgement *ought* to be involved, whether the participants like it or not. This temptation ought to be suppressed. It is not the business of the consultants, *as such*, to deplore any one attitude or advocate another. To do so is to foment a separate conflict. That might well be a private moral imperative, but it is professionally unforgivable. The objective of the panel selection must be to find a group who will do their job well, while giving no offence by their person or their extra-workshop roles.

3.2. The Knowledge Base of the Panel.

Relevant knowledge, as distinct from status and qualifications, is also a property required of panelists. Again, the distinction can be drawn between the general and the particular.

The requisite general knowledge ideally combines theory with practical experience. An ideal panelist should have a comprehensive grasp of conflict theory, in addition to substantial experience of its application in problem-solving exercises. No such ideal person actually exists at the moment, although some individuals in the conflict research field have begun to approach these requirements in recent years, and more should become available as courses and colleges turn out a new, younger generation of trained specialists.

Fortunately, a workshop contains several consultants rather than a single mediator. This arrangement permits both a degree of specialization by field and some blending of experience with problem-solving innocence. The practice acknowledges both these principles, acknowledging the relative under-development of conflict analysis as a discipline, with panels drawing upon political scientists, specialists in industrial relations, economists and sociologists, and people with experience in using supportive techniques in social work, as well as the international relation analysts who have formed the core group. The common theme, heavily reinforced by the occasional experience of departing from it, is that all are behavioural scientists - scholars with an interest how people respond to their environment.

Another important quality of panelists is an ability to work together as a team and to form a harmonious and productive working relationship within the panel itself. A workshop is no place for *prima donnas*, particularly if the complex tasks involved in conducting a successful workshop are to be carried out successfully. Respect for others' views and ideas and a willingness to question one's own perceptions and assumptions, are qualities hoped for from participants but essential from the panel, if the latter are to work together as a team. Such qualities are enhanced among colleagues who have worked together previously in workshop settings and have learned to trust one another. Even so, we have found that it is helpful for the panel to prepare for workshop by having at least a two-day pre-planning session (which may well also involve other consultants who will not present in the actual workshop). In such meetings, the general outline of the week (or weeks) ahead can be considered, aims and objectives clarified, roles assigned, possibly relevant ideas theories discussed, and arrangements made for daily panel meetings to discuss progress, or lack of it, as the workshop progresses.

In several past exercises we have found it helpful to include number of panelists who play the peripheral but essential role of observers, rather than as central facilitators, who are responsible for the ongoing conduct of the workshop. In this role, special knowledge of the conflict and its environment can be brought to bear on the discussions by individual observers, who can note unexpected statements or reactions, subtle shifts of position, nuanced comments or coded messages being sent, and perhaps received, by participants. All members of a panel of facilitators are able to play this observer role to some degree - apart, perhaps from the chair or lead facilitator, whose task of guiding interaction usually occupies all that person's available time and attention. However, it is useful to find people with special knowledge of the conflict and ask them to observe the process, so that they can note their impressions of any important, if delicate changes during the workshop discussions, and feed them back the facilitators during the panel's regular evening debriefing and forward planning sessions.

As experience with conducting problem-solving exercises has increased, we have found it essential to appoint one or more individuals to the specific role of *exercise historian*, with the task of observing and recording the flow of events within the whole exercise process. This includes the preparations for and aftermath of the actual workshop, and, most importantly, the activities, ideas, reflections and suggestions of other exercise members, panelists as well as participants. Every member of a workshop panel tends to keep notes, but these are seldom enough to record and reconstruct an accurate and complete account of the detailed 'flow' of interactions within the exercise - reactions, turning points, changes of tone and pace, ideas that were dropped or lost, roads not taken. It has proved particularly important to have a record of 'out of workshop' discussions and debates about workshop strategies and the direction

of the next day's work, as well as about the development of a panel and of an overall 'workshop culture'. If no one is initially made responsible for such a 'process record', much of the work on the planning and later review sessions can be lost.

The planning sessions, in addition to the post-workshop meetings to analyse the results of the week, are essential for success. They are also time-consuming and demanding and underline again the stressful and exhausting nature of conducting the workshop for the panel. Workshops demand a great deal at an emotional and intellectual level of both participants and panellists, which is another reason for our requirement that each panelist possesses the ability to work as an equal member of a team, rather than as its dominant leader.

Finally, all panellists need to have *some degree* of knowledge of the conflict situation to be discussed. But only some. On this point, both pure theory and the fruits of experience produce a counter-intuitive stipulation. A thorough knowledge of the area, its history, economy, politics and culture could actually be harmful - personal likes and dislikes of local personalities even more so. The reason for this is that the panelists are not there to instruct the participants on facts and figures or dates and laws, or even causes and effects. They are there to help the analysis of the conflict. Analysis requires data and *the data consist mainly and most importantly of the perceptions and experiences of the parties 'represented' by the participants present at the workshop*. By definition, the perceptions of the two sides will differ in any conflict. For the panel to contrive a third 'correct' perception would only add another, somewhat trivial, party to that conflict. Problem solving seeks to analyse and resolve a conflict, *not* to extend its scope.

On the other hand, the panelists do require a sufficient familiarity with the situation to enable them to avoid embarrassment and to ask pertinent questions. There is, consequently, an optimum information level for the panel in respect of each exercise, and we have found that the procedure of judging its scope and content is quite manageable on a case-by-case, commonsense basis. The necessary factual information can form part of the briefings that should precede the opening of the workshop. Journalists, diplomats or other practitioners, and academic regional experts or field specialists can all be helpful in providing the relevant background. The aim might be characterized as the cultivation of an 'innocent' eye that enables one to ask searching, fundamental questions rather than 'ignorant' ones.

4. A Re-analysis of Available Information

At the final, pre-workshop stage, then, it is important to make serious efforts to revise one's original assessment of the conflict made in the earlier stages of the problem-solving exercise. Preliminary data will already have been gathered in preparation for the field trips necessary to interest parties to the conflict in the possibility of holding an exercise and to make preliminary arrangements for holding a workshop. To this will have been added data gathered from these direct contacts with leaders and from other sources, some listed above. The process of *improving the quality of data* about the conflict is, of course, a continuous one and one pre-eminently carried out *during* the workshop. But the final preparation stage is an appropriate point in the overall process to re-analyse available data to obtain some preliminary estimate of *the structure of the issues in the' conflict*, the manner in which these have changed over time and the range of acceptable 'solutions' envisaged by the adversaries.

SEE EXERCISE 7.4

Whenever possible, therefore, the consultants and the panel should devote some time to considering what they think they have learned so far about the conflict, to re-analysing its main features, and cautiously to begin to make a preliminary assessment of the nature of the issues and problems likely to arise during the actual workshop. At this stage, they can also attempt to fill in gaps in the knowledge they feel they require about the conflict by talking informally with representative members of the parties in conflict, whenever such persons are available, in order to obtain missing data - but particularly to gain some empathy for the perceptions and emotions of those actually involved in the dispute. Once again, this process needs to be carried out in a tentative fashion and it is vital that consultants should avoid forming an inflexible picture of 'What the conflict is *actually* about'. There will be many views about this among the parties themselves and even more among outsiders. Members of 'diasporas', distant from the actual arena in which the conflict is being pursued, often tend to possess more extreme views and positions than those directly involved in, and knowledgeable about, the conflict, and bearing its costs directly. Hence, our initial rule also applies at this stage to any re-analysis of the conflict; be cautious in believing that one has accurate picture of the complexities of the conflict and be prepared to revise this picture the nearer one comes to those directly involved in prosecuting the struggle.

SEE EXERCISE 7.5

5. Preliminary Preparations

With all the preparations complete, the consultants are free attend to the *intellectual* management of the forthcoming work shop. The visiting panellists should, by this stage, be integrated into a team with the sponsoring consultants. The team can begin planning the strategy and tactics that will extend throughout the workshop and beyond, into the follow-up phase.

A chair or lead facilitator needs to be appointed, at least for opening session; later the role can rotate. Tentative decisions have to be made about introductory techniques and lines of discussion to be interposed at various critical

stages. There can be a preliminary division of roles among the panelists, so that each has a number specific tasks and, when the occasion arises, can introduce different ideas, or bodies of theory. Some panelists use blackboards or flip charts while others do not, but their interventions should generally conform to some coherent - and eventually familiar - pattern. One common sign of success in getting participants to adopt analytical as opposed to belligerently partisan roles is when they begin draw on blackboards or flip charts!

Known foibles and proclivities of the participants can be considered, so that ways can be worked out to anticipate an perhaps forestall wholly disruptive or negative contributions.

None of this amounts to anything as tight as a formal agenda nor should it constitute manipulation of the participants. Good preparation should produce an adaptable set of guidelines which ensure that the workshop is kept on track, with the parties' representatives engaging in a flow of communication which, with the help of the panelists, will enable them to find *their own route* towards a resolution of their conflict.

EXERCISE 7.1: Maintaining Confidentiality.

Background Discussion

One of the continuing dangers in the preparations stage of many workshops is that the fact of its taking place at all may, of itself, become part of the bargaining and manoeuvring that parties continue, even during de-escalation and discussions stages of the conflict. This is especially the case in situations where one or other of the parties has committed itself to '... no talks with the enemy unless ...'; or where there is strong internal opposition to contacts with an adversary seen as evil and utterly uncompromising.

In such circumstances, the consultants' guarantee of confidentiality may be particularly important in ensuring that the problem-solving exercise, or a particular workshop, takes place at all. Frequently, the possibility that their own intra-party opposition, their rank and file supporters, 'hawks' within the adversary, or the 'world at large' will learn about the holding of even an informal, academic set of discussions, will cause leaders to back away from the contacts, thus causing a major dilemma for the third party. This possibility has to be anticipated and planned for.

Exercise Scenario

In spite of numerous difficulties, you have finally managed to persuade the President of the Etrurian Regional Government to give his approval for the holding of a small, problem-solving workshop on the Lusitanian/Etrurian problem purely '...as an experiment and to help you in your research...' to quote the President's confidential letter of acceptance. However, you know that he, and the other leaders of the constitutionalist parties in Etruria, are highly sensitive about their participation, given the terms of the Alva Accord. It is also clear that they are under some pressure from the leaders of the ADL, their partners in the Etrurian Region's coalition Government, not even to attend such discussions.

It is also clear that the leaders of PAVE are more than pleased to come to a workshop and that they regard this meeting in some ways as a preliminary step towards the ending of their political isolation in Etruria. You have emphasized to them, as well as to the other parties, that the discussions, and the fact that they will take place, will be confidential and that participants will attend as individuals and not as formal representatives of any political parties or governments.

Moreover, as you have explained, the workshop is a wholly 'academic' exercise and will imply no question of recognition of the legitimacy of their position on the conflict or of POME, the guerilla organization to which they are said to be closely linked.

Finally, you have emphasized that, as the workshop is unofficial and academic, it will have no effect on the continuing ban on formal contacts with PAVE contained in the Alva Accord although, you have added, a successful workshop may lead towards a reconsideration of the central provisions of that Accord.

Exercise Task

Two weeks after receiving the final agreement to attend from the participants suggested by the main parties within Etruria, and four weeks before the opening date of the workshop, a colleague in Etruria faxes you a short article that has appeared on an inside page of *Combat*, the weekly journal that espouses the cause of Etrurian separatism and is usually regarded as the mouthpiece of PAVE.

The article is headlined 'The Meeting That Will Never Take Place' and discusses the set of then confidential workshops held several years ago on the Cyprus conflict by the Canadian Centre for Peace and Security Studies, which led to the establishment of a joint Turkish-Greek Cypriot Planning Committee to suggest ways of encouraging functional integration on the island of Cyprus. It then goes on to speculate about the value of such meetings for the parties in Etruria '... at the present stage of the struggle ...', and outlines the details of a 'future scenario ...' for a workshop series (parties attending, possible participants, agenda items), which is so close to what you are planning that it is clear that somebody has been leaking details of the workshop to *Combat*.

It is only possible to speculate about the source of the leak and what their intentions are (to wreck the workshop, or to gain maximum political advantage from its taking place, or ... ?) but the immediate problem is the effects such an article is likely to have both on your own guarantee of confidentiality to all the parties and the participants, and on the willingness of the already 'jumpy' leaders of the constitutionalist parties to attend the planned workshops.

What do you do?

EXERCISE 7.2: Inviting the Participants.

Background Discussion.

For most workshops, preliminary contacts with the parties finally result in a formal letter of invitation from the consultant's organization (not the leadership of the parties involved) to each of the individual participants. The letter stresses, among other things, that each will attend as an individual and not as a formal representative, and outlines administrative, travel and logistical arrangements for the workshop.

While the latter details are important, another major part of the letter of invitation is an attempt to set out some information about the nature of a problem-solving workshop and what the participants, who are unlikely ever to have attended such an exercise, can expect during the four to five days that they will be closeted with members of the enemy, and a somewhat mysterious entity called a 'panel'.

Partly, the purpose of this information is simply to prepare the participants and to lay down some groundrules for the meeting and for the after-the-workshop period; but it is also partly to provide some reassurance for the participants that they are not going to take part in some 'experiment', or have their confidence abused, or be exposed to any dangers during or after the exercise. The outline needs to be brief but clear, the tone to be reassuring, and the whole composition to be open about what is likely to happen during the week.

What consultants need to try to avoid is any participant saying indignantly in the final session: 'I did not expect this sort of thing to happen to me!'

Exercise Scenario

You have managed to convince both the President of Zandia and the leaders of the ALF to give their approval for the first of what you hope will be a series of three or four problem-solving workshops on the Zandian/ALF conflict, although both leaderships still remain sceptical.

Both the Zandian President's Office and the ALF Representative in Washington have provided you with a list of suggested participants for the first workshop, most of whom, to your relief, are neither formal members of the Zandian Government or bureaucracy, nor officials within the ALF.

You know that all the individuals on the lists have been alerted by the ALF and the Government that your Centre at the University of Umea 'may' be getting in touch with them to participate in a workshop and that '... this is alright, at least until we see what is involved in such an exercise ...'

Exercise Task

YOU have been through the list of individuals suggested by the two sides and have selected three possible participants to represent the Government's position and three to represent the ALF's views, aspirations and objectives.

There has been some question about whether your Centre should passively accept the principle of taking participants from a list supplied by the two rival sets of leaders, or whether you should take two from each list and then seek a third 'outsider'. This still remains an issue on your Planning Committee.

However, the immediate task is that of writing a letter of invitation to the chosen participants, outlining both the administrative arrangements (site, date, travel and accommodation arrangements, panel, etc.) but, more importantly, explaining to the participants just what sort of an event they are being invited to. All are familiar with debates, with formal conferences and with law courts. None know anything at all about collaborative problem-solving workshops or facilitated discussions.

Write a first draft of the letter of invitation.

EXERCISE 7.3: Preparing the Panel.

Background Discussion

Even when acceptances to a workshop have been received and other logistical arrangements (finance, site, travel, accommodation) concluded, much planning and preparation remains to be done.

Much thought has to be given to the assembling and preparation of a panel of facilitators, who will have to work together throughout the workshop, often for long hours and under much stress. The panel has to work as a well-integrated team of facilitators, not as single individuals. The general objectives of the workshop have to be agreed and a tentative, flexible agenda prepared for presentation to participants on the first day of the discussions. Roles must be agreed and assigned, review procedures for each evening set in place, and decision processes agreed.

Exercise Scenario

YOU have succeeded in persuading both the rival leaderships of the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities on the island of Cyprus to support an unofficial, five-day workshop to be held at your university-based research centre in Sweden, to analyse current relationships on the Island' and to 'explore new options for moving towards a resolution of the dispute'.

The Greek Cypriot Government has insisted that this is an informal, 'academic' and completely unofficial meeting, while the representative of the President of the (unrecognized) 'Turkish Republic of North Cyprus' (TRNC), who finally gave you his assent, tried very hard to get you to agree to making this a discussion between 'representatives of the two governments'.

Four individuals, two Greek Cypriot and two Turkish Cypriot, nominated by their respective leaderships as being able to 'represent the interests and aspirations of the two communities on the Island of Cyprus ...' (a quote from your letter of invitation), will arrive at your Centre in Umea north of Stockholm in four days time. The older Greek Cypriot representative is a retired diplomat who was deputy head of the Cypriot delegation to the UN until 1986; the younger is the vice-principal of the Nicosia Technical College and has been active in the cause of women's rights among the Greek Cypriot community. On the Turkish Cypriot side there are a younger businessman, who is a personal friend of the President of the TRNC, and a member of the President's personal staff, known to be a 'hardliner'.

Exercise Task

Apart from your (three) selves, you have invited a well-known academic facilitator from the University of Waterside, Ontario, to be a member of your facilitating panel. Professor X, who holds an appointment as a Professor of Psychiatry at his university, has a great deal of experience in facilitated processes and analytical problem solving, but has a firm belief in the appropriateness of his own, rather structured model of a 'workshop' based upon ideas derived from the NTL approach, T-Group theories and the work of Carl Rogers and Leonard Doob. In contrast, your fifth panel member has experience in labour-management negotiations but has proved very flexible when you have worked with him in the past. You feel, however, that you need a sixth member of the panel to complete the team.

At the moment, you seem to face two major problems about the panel and the planning of the workshop:

- (1) What sort of person do you think would be most appropriate to form a sixth member of the facilitating team, and what major roles should all six members take during the opening days of the discussion? How do you plan to arrange this with the other three members of the team when they arrive tomorrow? How do you plan to review the working of the team during the course of the workshop?
- (2) What do you hope to achieve from the workshop, what will be your underlying plan for conducting it, and what sort of an agenda/order of business do you propose to present to the participants on Monday's opening session?

However, just as the Planning Committee is about to meet to discuss these issues, another matter arises that demands the immediate attention of Committee members:

You have received a telephone call from the local representative of BBC Television, who has somehow got wind of the meeting and would like 'to interview some of the members of the workshop', both before it starts and after it ends. Your Administrative Director has promised to call him back later today with an answer to his request.

Make recommendations for dealing with each of these issues.

EXERCISE 7.4: Reviewing the Data.

Background Discussion

Once initial contacts with the parties have been made directly, the proposal for a workshop put and accepted and preparations for the workshop put in hand, consultants should (whenever possible in conjunction with all the panel members) review the information they have gathered during the previous diagnostic and contact stages.

The objective should be to fill in and summarize, in a highly tentative fashion, the information about the structure of the conflict gained so far and to highlight information that is still lacking and which might only become available during the interaction between participants in the actual workshop.

Tentatively, consultants could now begin to put together a preliminary picture of the main issues in the conflict and the way in which these are defined and evaluated by the parties themselves.

Exercise Task

Using the list of key questions developed in Exercise 5.3, develop a preliminary analysis of the conflict chosen for a problem-solving exercise. Assess and note particularly the quality and reliability of available data and those aspects of the conflict where data is currently sparse or unreliable.

Make two tentative lists of the 'key' issues in the conflict as perceived by both sides, attempting to put these into central and peripheral categories for each of the adversaries. Use these lists to begin to construct a classification scheme for types of issues encountered in this conflict and possibly to be met in future, similar types of dispute.

EXERCISE 7.5: Increasing Empathy for all Parties.

Background Discussion.

Gathering and interpreting data *at a distance* about a complex and intense interaction such as a protracted and deep-rooted conflict can only, at best, give a uni-dimensional insight into the nature of the problem about to be approached. At worst, it will entirely leave out people's feelings and emotions, their commitments and aspirations, their hopes and fears, save in the most bloodless fashion. At best, such analysis will provide only a partial insight into what often proves to be key data in understanding, analysing and helping to resolve the conflict.

This type of psychological data is, in our experience, best revealed during the interaction of the workshop itself and there the effects can sometimes be shattering for participants who are not prepared for the levels of emotion that can be generated in such a setting. It is important, therefore, to do something to try to prepare panel members for this affective aspect of the conflict they are helping parties to resolve, quite apart from the instrumental or informational side of the dispute.

One way of carrying out such preparation is to undertake interviews with committed and partisan members of parties in conflict, partly to add to the set of data about the origins, history and key issues in the dispute, but also to obtain some empathy for the psychological and emotional dimensions of that conflict, which in themselves are important data for conflict analysis.

Exercise Task

Devise an open-ended interview schedule (a list of questions) for use with respondents who are members of the parties in the conflict which is the subject of the problem-solving exercise planned by your group of consultants.

Compare the questions with the original list of key questions developed in the earlier Exercise [5.3.] designed to obtain factual information about the conflict under analysis.

Carry out at least one interview with a member of the parties to the dispute, record the data obtained from such interviews and extract what you consider to be the most important findings about the conflict derived from this/these interview(s). Compare the data gained from this type of analysis with that gained through other forms of preliminary diagnosis.

CHAPTER 8

THE CONDUCT OF A WORKSHOP

In a CAPS workshop, the analysis of a conflict and a resolution are two aspects of the same process. What the parties have to say about the conflict provides the source of its solution. Therefore, everything that happens in the workshop has to be designed to increase the probability that the participants engage in genuine communication, and correspondingly reduce the chances of a breakdown of the meeting.

1. The First Workshop: An Ideal Model

In a perfectly constructed and wholly successful workshop, the flow of events follows a smoothly evolving pattern, passing through four broad phases. The meeting opens with greetings and assurances that the proceedings will be informal and confidentially directed towards understanding and research. This is an important event, which sets the tone of the first days of the workshop. It should be carefully prepared and delivered, with some contingency planning for the kind of issues that participants often raise at the outset of the workshop. Can one take and take away notes? Will a record be kept? Can one introduce written evidence? Should one interrupt other speakers with questions or to 'set the record straight'?

SEE EXERCISE 8.1

The participants are then invited, in turn, to explain to the whole group the nature and origins of the conflict, its present state, and what appear to be key obstacles to its solution. Presentations follow, and usually take at least two days in total depending upon the number of participants. They should be given without interruption or debate, a requirement that calls for tact and skill on the part of the lead facilitator and other members of the panel, because the atmosphere often becomes tense and fraught with emotion. The account by each side includes references to history, atrocity stories perhaps affecting family members of those present, and a great deal of provocative comment on present and future conditions, possible outcomes and the effects of various forms of outside intervention. Much emotion can characterize this first stage of most workshops, but this should not be surprising given the protracted and possibly violent nature of the conflict under analysis. It is absolutely necessary to complete this stage of the process, to allow participants a full opportunity to present their histories of the conflict and their own feelings about events, motivations, the other side, their own justifications and aspirations - and aspects of the conflicted relationship that they deem important in its development, protraction and resistance to solution. This first stage can seem long-drawn-out and depressing, but it is important not to try to cut it short. Until participants feel that they have 'told their story' in a way fully satisfactory to them, they will be unwilling to move on to consider the present and the future rather than the past and its effects on the present. Premature closure of this process can be self-defeating.

It is possible to discern that a turning-point has been reached when participants begin to repeat themselves and show frustrating signs of recognizing that they seem to be 'going around in circles' and getting nowhere. In many cases, participants begin to display an air of waiting to see what will happen next and to display a slightly impatient expectation that the panel 'do' something. At that point, members of the panel need to provide some 'bridge' from the initial stage of the workshop into a second and hopefully more productive stage.

SEE EXERCISE 8.2

A variety of options is now open to the facilitating panel. Members can ask a series of carefully prepared 'clarifying' questions about points made during presentations that open up further issues or probe more deeply into why certain events took place, or why widely differing perceptions and interpretations arose. They can begin to construct a list of key issues or points for further discussion with the participants. They can stimulate a general discussion of what seem to be 'the main issues' as derived from the opening statements by the participants. The last should be done by the panellists without padding or any judgement whatever and often consists mainly of inquiry into the theoretical implications of the factual and historical statements that have previously been made. In this way, the ground covered is retraced, but this is not done with the purpose of reconciling differences, nor to set the historical record straight. It is done by the panellists often with the evident and rather formal purpose of using what they have heard in order to improve their theories. Relevant general theories about why conflicts occur can be discussed. Models of conflict processes can be considered. In particular, panellists can draw parallels with other conflicts. They can talk at some length about conflicts that have occurred in the past, conflicts at other social levels, and conflicts that are currently taking place in other parts of the world. This will usually be met with a response from the participants that their conflict is 'different' (as, of course, it is) but some comfort generally seems to arise

from a recognition that, while their conflict *is* different, it is not necessarily completely unique. Moreover, others have found workable solutions to conflicts that do not appear wholly dissimilar.

Hopefully, the tension drops as the participants become interested and involved in this second phase of the workshop. In most cases, it will require approximately as much time as the first phase, so that the phase usually begins to come to an end on about the fourth day. Its conclusion is signaled when the participants begin to take a serious part in the business correcting what the panelists have to say about conflict theory. There is a progressive decay in the number of set-piece monologues from both participants and panelists, although the facilitating panel may have to work strenuously to bring this about, especially when participants come to the workshop with their own, rigidly set agendas.

SEE EXERCISE 8.3.

At this point, long statements, indignant rebuttals, provocative challenges or responses and harsh accusations gradually diminish, and something recognizably like a good academic seminar emerges around the table. The panel can begin to feel that the workshop has succeeded in its first task.

The third phase involves a focus on the central problem: how to end, or begin to end, the violent conflict under consideration. Discussion is again guided by the panelists, although firmly within a non-judgmental style, and a day or so is spent on it. They take the group through the various possibilities for a termination of their conflict, selecting one by one the 'solution' identified and recommended by the various participants in earlier statements. Each possible formula is discussed strictly in terms of its theoretical properties, illustrated with references where and when some version of it has been used before in the world, under what conditions and with what effect.

In the course of this discussion, every single one of prescriptions favoured by each party before arrival at workshop is likely to be rejected. The rejection occurs not so much because of the unacceptability of any given proposal to the opposition, as represented at this discussion, but more usually because of the theoretical predictions that can be made about the probable future history of each scheme if it were ever implemented; its constitutional impracticability, its functional shortcoming, or the unrest that would result from some injustice contained within it.

The workshop members are left, therefore, with the central problem to be solved. The situation is now understood, in the sense everyone present is satisfied that everyone else present has an accurate grasp of what the difficulties are. The problem is the parties in the conflict could and should do next.

At this stage, the mood of the workshop is frequently one of discouragement. The participants do not necessarily enjoy being in the presence of their opponents any more than they did at the outset of the workshop. In fact, they may enjoy it less, because harsh words have been exchanged and pet ideas have been crushed. But the participants do recognize, in a way that they might not at the beginning, the extent of their opponents' commitment and determination, and the limits within which both sides are free to act. Realistic mutual perceptions should have been achieved. Everyone begins to develop an awareness that this workshop has nearly run its course. But none of the proposed solutions seems to be viable. What remains?

What remains is an uncomfortable choice. That, at least, is usually clear to all those present. Either the participants return to the conflict, and carry on as before; or something must happen, now, in the workshop. There is a real danger that the participants pack their papers in their briefcases and leave. But usually they do not. They stay, because 'carrying on as before' is considerably less attractive to them than it was, and in any case they have been engaging in violent conflict behaviour not from *attraction* but from *compulsion*. The exchanges in the workshop have demonstrated in vivid detail just what is to be expected in the way resistance from the adversaries. And the probable long-term consequences of permitting the conflict to escalate have been thoroughly examined, to equally depressing effect.

Discussion then enters the last days, and its final substantive phase. The clashing perceptions and combative intentions of the parties are explicitly known. It is usually all too apparent that the area of possible initial agreement is very small indeed, almost too small to be seen. The participants are forced, by their own, shared, hostile logic, to focus upon that tiny area. Almost visibly, they will try to expand. Panelists can help by suggesting possibilities for expansion, or how it might develop, but the nature of that development is for the participants to choose and explore. And they usually do, because they can now see that to focus upon this is the only realistic course of action open to them. This becomes a path towards resolution; the process of this initial workshop is complete.

Before considering in more detail the theory and practice of this workshop process, it should be emphasized that two things do not happen in a workshop. Most importantly, each party's basic, underlying attitudes towards the other side are not changed, although respect for the individual participants in the workshop may increase. If there were fundamental changes, a workshop would become a brainwashing session, which it is not. And it would be a pointless exercise, because the brainwashing process would be obvious to the colleagues of the participants as soon as they returned to their normal activities. Everything they say would be discounted. Instead, a workshop should ensure that mutually hostile perceptions are not

necessarily reduced, but may even be heightened, sharpened, enlarged, intensified – but, above all, they are understood. Workshops should be exercises in realism, not in wishful thinking.

Equally, the workshop is rarely a joyous occasion during which the participants achieve their resolution by acquiring firm friendships in the opposite camp, henceforth resolving conflict on a new basis of mutual liking and willing cooperation. That process might be more likely with interpersonal conflicts, where attitudes matter more than resources, but it is initially irrelevant to the representative process by which large-scale social and political conflicts must be tackled. Personal feelings of amity or discord among participants in a workshop are only peripherally relevant with the underlying potential for resolution, with two provisos;

- (1) The participants must actually go through the process; if they should walk out, switch off or waste too much time and energy on vituperation, they would never see the point of it.
- (2) At some later stage in the overall resolution process, an accompanying large-scale reconciliation process involving the grass-roots members of warring adversaries must be set in train; if this process of conflict transformation is not effected then agreements at elite levels will simply be repudiated at a later date and the conflict will resume.

For an effective 're-entry' of the participants into their own political surroundings and an equally effective 'follow-up' process of conflict *transformation*, the only solid foundation is a cool realism. That is the aim of the workshop. There are no magic solutions to severe, protracted conflict. The escalation of a conflict is caused by unrealistic attitudes and expectations. Escalation can be stopped only by a realistic understanding, by the parties themselves, of what is happening, what can be expected happen, and what can be done about it.

2. The Practical Aspects

To enable the flow of communications to proceed smoothly, some of the principles of group dynamics need to be applied in designing and managing the workshop. The most important of these is concerned with numbers. Serious discussion cannot occur in large groups, just as it cannot take place on a public platform. Optimal size of a CAPS workshop is about twelve persons, comprise eight participants and four panelists, although reasonably successful ones have been mounted with as many as twenty.

It is desirable also to achieve continuity in personnel, but for various reasons affecting both participants and panelists this may be difficult to maintain over any length of time. Some workshop have been run with floating populations of up to forty or people, including 'in-and-out' panelists and representatives of a series of different parties. Flexibility and variety do, of course, have advantages, and there is legitimate debate about the *relative* efficacy of different models. But the objectives of shared vocabulary, a degree of 'trust' (in strictly workshop-purpose terms) and the build-up of a joint creative tension (in short, a 'workshop culture'), all point towards the model of a single, small group, in a single room throughout the meetings. Deviation from this tends to shift the process towards bargaining, conference procedures with formalized rules, and public display.

Numbers are also important as regards the overall size of the facilitating panel with its attendant observers and advisers. Again, it is important to keep this overall 'Planning Group' relative small and close-knit, although there is always a temptation bring in more people, either because they can offer local expertise on the conflict, or because their presence will help familiarize them with problem-solving procedures, or because their organizations are sponsoring the workshop. These reasons are all more or less valid, but they should not be allowed to supersede the basic rule of keeping the Planning Group flexible and manageable. A maximum of eight members seems to work well. Beyond that, numbers begin to interfere with coherence and effectiveness.

Second to numbers in importance is the nature of the agenda. A problem-solving meeting opens with no detailed agenda. Proceedings will be built around the single general-purpose item that is known to all concerned in the early stages of the exercise. This is that the participants should each explain their conflict to the panelists, in the presence of their opponents. If inquiries should be made about what happens after that, the answer is that what has been said will then be thoroughly discussed. That is the basic agenda, and it should be openly described at the outset, although it is also sometimes helpful to suggest certain broad topics - conflict origins, underlying issues, obstacles to progress - which might well be discussed during the five or six days of meetings.

In discussing these points with the parties *in advance*, it is important to explain the absence of the familiar, itemized agenda, with its briefing papers, draft resolutions and working texts. It may also be necessary to allay suspicions that what is about to happen is some kind of therapeutic exercise, a T-group, or a cult process. Decision-makers may, or may not, approve of such exercises for other people to indulge in. But they certainly will regard it as a waste of time for their own busy staff, advisors or consultants to engage in them. So the workshop should be described, and run, as what it is: a research seminar,

open-ended, with the detailed agenda emerging point by point in response to the wishes and interests of the party representatives as they go through the features of the conflict.

Physical details also deserve attention because of their effect on the behaviour of those present. Arrangements for seating can be critical, particularly where the participants see themselves as having symbolic roles. In inter-governmental mediation, seating arrangements, and even doorway provision, have been known to wreck negotiations before they commence. In a problem-solving workshop, seating arrangements should be such as to convey the desired nature of the discussions: informal, but serious. Successful workshops in the past have always employed a single large table, square or preferably round, with adequate elbow room for all concerned. The lead facilitator (or chairperson) takes up any position, or in the centre of one long side if the shape deviates from the preferred circular model; and panelists should take seats on either side of him in case those locations are thought to determine precedence. Participants are invited to choose their own seats, and invariably do so in opposed rows, which they then retain.

For problem-solving and its fundamental reliance upon formal conflict theory, blackboards or flip charts are a basic need. The panelists must be prepared to use them extensively to draw diagrams, models, tables, maps and other symbols for the simplified display of complex ideas. Problem solving cannot succeed unless the panelists can capture the genuine interest of the participants in what they have to say. Conflict theory is not an easy subject.

Bodily comfort, control of stress and the maintenance of attention all need to be provided for as well. In these matters, the timetable is decisive. Six hours a day, in two sessions each having a short break at midpoint, is a practical norm. It allows for meals and drinks to be taken together, which may (but only may) be helpful in encouraging the participants to mix with each other. It also gives a needed opportunity for each party, panel included, to caucus and thus to debate their contribution to each forthcoming session. In practice, many workshops have been timetabled more intensively than this, because the people involved were short time. It is sometimes argued that intensive timetabling should always be done, and even that the organizers should employ supporting devices, such as clock-stopping, in order to coerce weary discussants into agreement. Such proposals are usually counter-productive. A problem-solving workshop cannot indulge in coercion in any form at all, or it fails.

3. The Role of the Panel

Panelists in a workshop have one of the most daunting of tasks known to social science. They have to be neutral. But we have long known, from ideologists and philosophers, both in the world of hard politics and in the self-indulgent world intellectual theorizing, that in the world of action, there are neutral persons. He (or she) who acts can only act upon his (or her) values. Values, by definition, specify choices. Choices, in turn, are by definition one-sided. Hence, anyone who acts in workshop runs the danger of favouring – or, at least, being seen to favour - one party.

There is no simple answer to this formidable observation. Its logic has undermined most of the well-meaning efforts at constructive mediation throughout history. Equally, most of the apparently successful 'resolutions' of conflicts in which a powerful intervening third party has played a major role demonstrate the principle clearly and directly. Typically, one party is favoured, with or without compensation, under some bargained or imposed arrangement which, essentially, takes the form of a compromise. On examination, these 'resolutions' turn out to be mere settlements: terminations imposed on the conflicting parties by the power, resources or authority of the third party.

If a panelist should forget the logic of neutrality in the course of a workshop, he stands to ruin his own credibility, and possibly that of the entire problem-solving approach as well. Therefore, he must not 'act'. What this means is that he should always try to avoid making any substantive comment or, particularly, moral judgement upon the characteristics of the parties, on the case which their representatives put forward, or on the merits of any outcome under discussion. It bears repeating that a confrontation between participants, people who represent groups in violent conflict, is in deadly earnest. It is not an intellectual game. It is the most sensitive of circumstances, and the demand placed upon the panelists is correspondingly extreme.

Panelists, then, are part of the furniture - the intellectual furniture in their case. Their first and most important task in any workshop is to listen and to make an analysis of the nature of the issues in the conflict and of the obstacles to its peaceful resolution. This is the first time they will have had the opportunity to do this with members of the parties in conflict together in one room, and often the conflict is revealed as being very different from that portrayed in parties' public positions or in outside analyses. Panelists need to listen for submerged issues, for hidden agendas, for unnoticed and unacknowledged hurts and resentments. They must note the differences between the public and private issues that exist within most parties in conflict. They must use their own experience of analysing conflicts to point them in the direction of relevant theories and insights about the causes, dynamics and exacerbating factors in this particular case. Positive and sensitive listening is demanded, not least because the panel needs to understand important nuances of the situation but because it is also an important confidence-building tactic to demonstrate 'committed' and

Careful listening to what participants have to say. Moreover, by undertaking 'careful listening', panel members may serve as a persuasive model for participants, whose inclination to listen hard to what other participants say, especially adversaries, may not be very strong.

SEE EXERCISE 8.4

Apart from careful listening and analysis, the panelists undertake other intellectual tasks. They supply insights, ideas, theories and parallels. They do this by asking questions, making analogies, drawing pictures, describing other situations, puzzling over definitions or details which they have trouble grasping, constantly returning to points made by participants and re-phrasing them, probing assumptions and drawing out implications. This should not mean that the participants perceive the panelists as bland or ineffectual. On the contrary, an effective panel can create some respect among the participants, which is a dangerous tendency because, as everyone knows, power tends to corrupt and no panelist should be exposed to the temptation to behave like King Solomon.

There is, however, one sense in which the values of the panelists should be made explicitly clear. Their values should be visible in the same way that the values of a doctor are visible to his patient. Just as the doctor's commitments to life and health are known to be sworn on oath, so panelist's commitment to a functional, just and non-violent social structure should be apparent in his every contribution. And just as the doctor must respect his patient's right to live as he pleases, whatever the damaging consequences, so the panelists must show their respect for the right of the parties to determine their own conduct. In short, to serve as a panelist in a problem-solving workshop is to learn what both politics and applied social science are really about.

4. The Role of Ideas in Problem Solving

The practical job of the panel members thus consists of listening, taking notes (done quite openly, although filming and recording are wholly inappropriate), asking questions and making academic points. The 'academic points' draw upon whatever body of theory and practice is relevant to the topics emerging as the case proceeds.

One commonly employed set of material is that which describe the tendency of conflicts to escalate, which is fortunately the best understood part of conflict theory. The panelist needs to be ready with ideas and examples about the interdependence of parties to a dispute; the escalatory effect of sacrifice and commitment; the polarization of attitudes; the way in which issues are changed and party alignments are shifted with each upward twist of a conflict spiral; ideas about the dynamics of arms races; of displacement and scape-goating; of the propensity for the parties to seek allies and for external parties to intervene.

The theme running all through this material is that of costs, benefits and alternatives. To fight involves costs of many kinds which include loss of freedom of choice and severe attitude changes in society, in addition to the more obvious costs involve in the exchange of butter for guns, the killing and maiming human beings and the destruction of homes, fields, highways and factories. Decision-makers in any conflict situation are concerned, constantly and rightly, about these costs, but they are usually forced by the logic of circumstances to see them as justifiable in relation to the potential benefits to be gained.

What may be less clear to them, because of the terrible short term pressures upon any leader in a crisis, is the way in which progressive accumulation of costs forces an equally progressive inflation of the anticipated benefits. An escalating conflict, therefore, has a logic of its own, comparable perhaps to that of a gathering hurricane in the atmosphere, or an impending multiple crash of cars travelling at speed on a super highway in misty conditions. Within this systemic framework, it should be possible to assist the participants in identifying the elements within the process by which they, as responsible authorities, are in danger of losing control over their own decisions. There are stages where the pace accelerates, decisions have a multiplier effect, and actions are undertaken, the consequences of which can never be taken back. As the kings and chancellors of Europe learned in August 1914, there are points of no return.

While engaged in this process of guiding the analysis of problem, the panelists need to be extremely careful when applying the most suggestive body of theory concerning conflict spirals, namely the theory of perception. It is especially a problem for a social psychologist, who can unwittingly find himself lecturing participants on the many ways in which cognitive dissonance theory, for example, proves them to be in the grip of misperceptions. They may be said to be misperceiving their opponents' behaviour, their own goals, the implications of the messages both sides transmit, and even their own fundamental values.

To do this (and much of the existing body of scholarly literature on the subject seems to suggest that panelists *should* do this) is not only an insult to the intelligence and responsibility of the participants; it also thwarts the purposes of the problem-solving process. It implies, logically, that the conflict is subjective, a thing that will dissipate of its own accord once a perceptual readjustment is made.

In a God-given sense, this does appear to be true; there is no objective need for massive violence in human affairs, merely a requirement for continuous adjustment of conflicting goals and actions as the risk of potential collision and damage becomes apparent. But in the context of a workshop, the parties are already ensnared in a genuine conflict situation. Damage has been done and more damage is likely. Intentions are hostile. These things are real, and the parties do their own self-interest no violation whatever in thinking of them as real. It is, consequently, something of an act of arrogance for a panelist to suggest to a participant that misperception is the root of the problem. It suggests that the panelist knows better than the participant what the facts are. He cannot possibly know that, and must never allow himself to think that he does.

Insofar as misperceptions can be identified in the analysis of the problem, and it always does seem to be present in substantial amounts, it should be treated as a physician treats psychosomatic pain. What the patient is suffering is completely genuine, but its cause may not be what he thinks it is.

The only possible cause of misperception that should, perhaps, be brought out into the open for full-scale destruction in a workshop is that most malignant of perceptual errors, the extreme hostile stereotype. If one party sees the other as totally malign, capable only of wicked acts, ways must be sought for the accused participant to show that these things are not so. His very presence in the meeting should be enough in itself to begin to break down this image and to show that there are potential negotiating partners on the other side.

Whereas perception theory is a minefield which has to be traversed, our experience suggests that there are other broad expanses of conflict theory which need not even be approached. Most of them deal with those broad-gauge interpretations of conflict causation and conflict structure that may together be called 'metaphysical' in the sense that they cannot be proved true or false. For the decision-maker, who may have suffered the misfortune of dogmatic inculcation with some of these ideas while taking university courses, they present nasty problems.

At the least, they demean him by their pretentious implications that only high-powered intellectuals can grasp their subtleties. At the worst, they frustrate his capacity to make choices that benefit his followers, by their suggestion that history is fated, controlled inexorably by mysterious historical forces that will work out his destiny in a way that he is powerless to prevent.

Most prominent among these pseudo-scientific claims is that which asserts that states live, in international relations, in a permanent condition of perpetual, objective conflict. The condition is said to be uniform and multi-dimensional, expressed in the 'laws' of power politics. Minor variants of this family of irrelevant dogmas suggest that geo-political considerations determine political decisions, or that climate shapes national character. An unsophisticated item is the modern form of Social Darwinism predicting that racial conflict is destined to work out its savage course in human affairs, and cannot be stopped. At the other extreme, sophisticated bodies of theory suggest that relations between rich and poor communities are necessarily, inevitably and 'homogeneously shaped into patterns of dominance and dependency. At an even higher level of sophistication, it is argued that political processes are fundamentally ordered according to class struggles, which, in turn, follows the historical course of material or technological change.

What is wrong with such ideas, for workshop purposes, is not that they are incorrect. Some of them may be right, in an ethereal domain of human understanding. Centuries of intelligent debate have, after all, culminated in the agreement of reasonable men to disagree about them. There is no question that, as ideas in themselves, some of them are important.

But for a workshop, the point is that they are of little practical use. They do not tell anyone what to do, when faced with a specific problem to be solved. Worse, they encourage fatalism, an excuse for decision-makers to rationalize away responsibility for the effects of their decisions. An appeal to one of them, which occurs from time to time in workshop discussion, is simply to flourish a red herring, the equivalent of a politician's pre-election promise to be all things to all men.

On the other hand, many of the unpretentious, smaller-scale theories of the causes and processes of conflict do have the potential for stimulating non-fatalistic, more productive discussion. These include ideas about resource scarcity and rank disequilibrium; various theories of rebellion and revolution; the prisoner's dilemma and game theory generally, including the zero sum/positive-sum distinction; theories about the nature of power; the Pareto optimum theorem; control theory and various other ideas about the nature of obedience to authority; and theories about the trickiest intellectual problem of all in conflict analysis - positional role defence.

In a workshop, these more concrete sets of ideas have two significant utilities. First, they are technically interesting, discussable in themselves and probably novel for at least some of the participants. Some of them lend themselves to being presented as graphic models on the blackboard, such as shifting alliances and cross-cutting cleavages; others can be shown to have a neat fit in history, both in domestic and international politics. Second, they are usable. They can be shown to lead towards a stimulating, productive body of ideas for the closing phases of a workshop. Fundamental distinctions, like that between associative and dis-associative peace strategies, can be offered for examination. '[t]he role of boundaries, partitions, and constitutionally entrenched clauses relating to majority and minority communities, all typical issues facing the

participants in a workshop, can be related to fundamental and repetitive patterns as demonstrated by the relevant theories.

At this concluding stage, discussion may well be steered towards integration theory. Its emphasis on managed social change is valuable. But it should be used selectively. Some of the scholarly writings about it can be misleading. These materials are based on the false assumption that the only way to solve small scale conflicts, even at the international level, is to create bigger and stronger states with full statutory provisions and with giant sized law-and-order forces to apply them. This is of no help to a workshop, because it is just as historicist as broad-gauge philosophies of inevitable conflict. A complete nation-state cannot be constructed in an academic workshop.

But integration theory also contains many ideas that can be used to enable the parties to see some way forward. Some of these are relatively abstract, such as the distinction between basic human needs, freely expressed human values, and the 'institutional' values of behaviour learned within a particular socio-situation, which could be changed by deliberate policy. Discussion of values leads to an examination of the notions of identity, legitimacy, and self-determination, which are the basic building-blocks of genuinely peaceful relationships. Time can be productively spent examining them.

Other ideas are more concrete, such as the notion of participation. Everyone alive has an intuitive understanding of human dignity, which means that the proposition that participation is a *sine qua non* for effective problem solving can easily be accepted, and its implications spelled out by the participants. The practical utilities of classical functionalism can also be coaxed into the discussion, because the notion of functional co-operation, or productive exchange, is universally understood in theory and applied in practice. That functionalism has far-reaching political implications, however, may not be a familiar idea, and panelists should find opportunities to emphasise the point.

Finally, many workshops inevitably arrive at a most pressing, need to spend much time discussing the nature and source of security. The sense of insecurity among the participants is likely to be very high, and any moves towards a resolution of their conflict needs to be accompanied by an increase in everyone's mutual security - or, at least, no diminution of it. Thus, our experience is that many workshops spend time discussing issues of trust, and lack of it; how to reduce tension between adversaries; what confidence building measures might be envisaged in future; and where they have successfully been used in the past, in other conflicts. Many final sessions of successful workshops have focused on the theory de-escalation processes, and on their practicalities - unfortunately one of the least developed branches of conflict theory.

Theories as such can thus be introduced by the panelists, although their natural tendency to give pat lectures must be firmly curbed. Fortunately, experience suggests that even the most wise, confident and experienced panelists can neither predict the actual outcome of any given workshop, nor forecast which set of ideas will eventually crystallize to form the basis of a minimally practicable resolution strategy.

5. Final Stages: Preparing for Return

In a successful workshop, participants should at least return with the feeling that they have developed a new, deeper and possibly different understanding of the conflict in which they are mutually involved, and with some ideas about how it might be moved nearer a solution, as well as some hope that it can be. Sometimes, these ideas are summarized in a number of mutually agreeable principles on which a long-term solution might be based.

SEE EXERCISE 8.5.

On other occasions, more concrete proposals for mutually reinforcing de-escalatory moves and follow up actions on participants' return to their own country or community, are discussed, and tentatively agreed. On yet others, the first of a series of mutual confidence-building measures has been sketched out for presentation to decision-makers.

At this final stage of the workshop, another sign of its success may be the participants' ability to assist each other in what will frequently be the difficult task of returning home after having talked to 'the enemy' and bringing a set of ideas for consideration by decision-makers or opinion-leaders who have not been through the workshop. 'Re-entry' is usually a difficult process for all participants and this shows itself in the latter stages of most workshops - particularly initial ones dealing with a protracted and violent conflict - in two ways.

Firstly, there is an increasing concern among participants with issues of confidentiality, and what information will be released about the workshop, by whom and in what manner.

SEE EXERCISE 8.6

Secondly, as participants realize that the workshop is almost over, even though there may be mention of a follow-up workshop (or even several) their positions, attitudes and statements often start to harden

somewhat. They tend to revert to the pattern of behaviour shown in the very early stages of the workshop. This may be disappointing for the panelists, but it is understandable in participants who may be anticipating having to justify their defence of their party's interests and positions on their return home. Disappointing or not, it has to be anticipated and dealt with.

Ideally, this issue of 'how best to arrange for return' forms the last topic of the workshop and, in a successful workshop, both sets of participants will be able, at least, to recognize that their opposite numbers *also* face a re-entry problem similar to, if not exactly the same as their own. In a highly successful workshop, both panel and participants may be able to discuss openly the details of this shared problem and work out a scheme or some guidelines which will help all participants avoid embarrassment and personal danger on their return.

Even with such guidelines and subsequent mutually supportive behaviour, which at the very least, takes the form of a mutual agreement about what participants will NOT do on their return home, the re-entry problem is a difficult one for those concerned. Both the members of the panel and all the consultants need to reflect on how this might best be achieved by their guests and what the consultant organization could do *after the workshop* to help ease the process.

From the brief outline above it should be clear that the final resolution of conflict does not happen as a magical transformation. At the end of a workshop there is often no flood of mutual sympathy, no burst of applause for an overwhelming breakthrough, not even a set of grudging signatures to some watered down, painfully negotiated communique. At the least, the participants will thank the panelists for having provided the opportunity for the exchanges, and then say, not merely as a courtesy, that they will be returning home with things to think about. At best, they will depart with specific ideas about possible actions, often small in scale but perhaps potentially large in significance, that might be undertaken by their home organizations.

In our experience, participants nearly always suggest that similar workshops should be held in the future. For the panelists, that may be justification enough, and the event counted as a success. However, the suggestion itself must be anticipated and some thought devoted to the possibilities and problems of follow up workshops, even if the intention of the consultants has always been to plan and conduct several more workshops as part of the overall exercise. What is implied for a workshop series, as opposed to a single meeting?

6. Continuing the Exercise: Workshop Sets and Series

While in the early days of the development of problem-solving approaches, the single workshop was the most that many consultants attempted, more recently there has been a recognition of the inadequacy of problem-solving exercises that consist simply of isolated meetings. Given the complexity of many protracted and deep-rooted conflicts, increased recognition of the need for a sustained, long-term effort to develop acceptable solutions has led to the use of a number of linked workshops. Some involve the same set of participants; others a widening circle of participants; still others a wholly new set of participants from related conflict levels.

This development should not be surprising, in view of the complexity of many protracted conflicts and our earlier comments in Chapter 5 about the need for problem-solving exercises to deal with multi-level or inter-linked conflicts, even if they generally should start with the conflicts at the levels most immediately affected. However, workshop series do pose numerous problems for consultants, and they are problems which are only just beginning to be explored in any systematic fashion. Questions about how workshops should be linked to one another, about what should be the order in which topics are tackled and participants invited to a workshop series, and about the linking of a set of workshops to official interactions and ultimately negotiations, all need to be posed and answered in theory and, ultimately, in practice.

To date, two models of sets of workshops have been developed and used by consultants. The first is the open ended 'series', in which an initial successful workshop generates a demand for further, similar meetings among participants who have found the contacts and discussions with 'the other side' useful and encouraging, at least in the sense of giving hope that some of the options tentatively discussed might lead towards a lasting solution. Often participants wish to return to report on the reception that new ideas and insights have had 'back home'. On other occasions, there is a wish to maintain contacts with participants from the adversary on more than a 'long distance' basis, and to gain some mutual reassurance from further meetings.

In this model, while the consultants may anticipate requests for further meetings, the exercise series continues only on an ad hoc basis, each subsequent workshop arising from participants' feelings that: (a) a further meeting is desirable and useful, or (b) that others would benefit from being included in the circle of those attending a workshop.

At present it is too early to suggest any general rules about ad hoc workshop series, as there have been too few from which to generalize. Experience does tentatively suggest, however, that participants tend to exhaust the workshop formula after three or at most four meetings. The reasons are firstly, that both the novelty and utility of establishing a channel of face-to-face communication with members of the 'enemy'

wear off, and some repetition sets in. Secondly, either the exercise is a success, in which case the interaction moves to more official levels and formal contacts replace those previously being held privately and off the record; or the exercise runs up against major barriers, frustration sets in, and participants turn to other forms of activity to seek a solution to the conflict.

If the 'series' model is an ad hoc, developmental one that takes advantage of opportunities for extending the set as they are demanded by participants, the model of a 'continuing' workshop is far more purposefully planned by the third parties. In the few examples of such purposeful exercises, the third party deliberately plans for a number of linked workshops to meet at stated intervals, with a focused, if flexible, agenda of topics for discussion. Participants are asked to commit themselves for the whole set of workshops, which means that they will have to anticipate and plan to deal not just with a series of re-entry points but also with the strong possibility that a widening circle of people within each adversary will learn that the meetings are occurring and the names of those attending. There is no need to emphasize the increased care that has to be taken in maintaining high levels of confidentiality, and the careful and credible justification needed for the continuation of the exercise.

The great advantage of such a continuing workshop, as opposed to an ad hoc series, is that a systematic programme of talks and discussions dealing with difficult problems in a logical sequence can be undertaken without losing the flexibility that enables new subjects and issues to be added to the workshop agenda as they arise. Given the customary dynamics of protracted conflicts, between-workshop events are bound to have an impact, on the relationships between the parties. These events, therefore, need to be examined and understood at the start of subsequent workshops, which can provide a forum for calmer analysis of their ongoing effects than would otherwise be available. However, the main focus of continuing workshops should be, and usually is, on the discussion and development of long-term solutions to the protracted conflict. This involves dealing systematically with the root causes of the conflict, rather than with behavioral manifestations of deep-rooted antagonisms. Long-term causes and long range solutions are properly the focus of continuing workshops.

Each of the three types of workshop discussed above - single workshops, ad hoc series and continuing workshops - presents consultants and organizers with a number of problems of assessment and evaluation, which are inextricably linked with the whole process of re-entry and follow-up. It is obviously important that participants should be fully prepared for return to their own country and their own party, whether or not there are plans for further meetings. It is equally important that each meeting is evaluated in its own terms and also in its effects on the conflict under analysis. This final task is discussed in the next chapter.

Exercise 8.1: Opening the Proceedings.

Background Discussion.

The task of making the opening statement that starts a collaborative problem-solving workshop is an important one, and customarily falls either to the main organizer of the workshop, who will have previously had personal contact with and thus be a familiar face; or to the panel member who is undertaking the chairing role during the opening session.

Whoever does it has a sensitive task. The participants must be welcomed and put at their ease. The panel must be introduced - and the participants, if necessary. Administrative arrangements should be set out clearly. More importantly, the aims and hopes of the workshop must be introduced in an interesting and motivating manner, without over-doing inspiration or rhetoric.

Ground rules for the meeting must be reiterated and acceptance obtained. Confidentiality and informality of proceedings must again be stressed. An outline agenda needs to be presented and agreed. Other key issues specific to that workshop must be covered.

Finally, the opening statement must lead easily into the first stage of the workshop: the request to participants to present their views of the current stage of the conflict, and the major obstacles to, and constraints on, the parties seeking a resolution.

Exercise Scenario

YOU have succeeded in finally getting participants and panel together for your planned five-day workshop on the Zandian-Azanian problem, although there was some last-minute difficulty with the attendance of the members representing the views of the ALF to the workshop, the reasons for which are not quite clear to the Planning Committee.

The members of the workshop have entered the conference room, settled themselves around the oval table, both sets of participants grouping together and carefully avoiding eye contact (even though, as you are aware, they are all personally known to one another); members of the panel have distributed themselves between and amongst the two groups. You are the lead facilitator for the first morning and have the task of introducing and starting off the workshop.

Exercise Task

Prepare and deliver the opening statement for that particular workshop, giving your fellow panel members a brief opportunity to introduce themselves and say why they are attending a workshop specifically on 'the Zandian-Azanian problem'.

End by requesting participants to begin to present their accounts of the current state of the conflict and their views of obstacles to a solution, and determine who speaks first.

Before anyone can respond to your last request, one of the ALF members of the workshop raises the issue of confidentiality and says that he feels that any useful findings, ideas or reports from the workshop should be made public. 'After all,' he says, 'what's the use of secret ideas if they are any good?'

How do you respond?

Exercise 8.2. Moving Out Of Stage One.

Exercise Scenario.

YOU and your fellow panel members have just spent two intellectually exhausting days facilitating what you hope will be the first of a series of workshops on the Zandian conflict.

Invited to present their assessment of the sources of the present civil war in Zandia, to give their views about the major current obstacles to a peaceful settlement and to give voice to the present concerns and aspirations of their parties, each member of the three-person teams presenting the views of the Zandian Government and the Azania Liberation Front has made a long and at times acrimonious presentation, during one of which a member of the opposing group walked out, saying he had not come here to listen to a pack of lies and propaganda.

Each of the presentations listed grievances against the crimes of the other side carried out during the war; presented a historical account favourable to their own side and highlighting the immoralities, untrustworthiness and insatiable ambitions of the other side, particularly its present leadership; demonstrated the legal and historical correctness of their own legitimate ambitions (the maintenance of territorial integrity and of given African boundaries by the Government; the right of national self determination by the ALF); and appealed to legal and historical precedent as justification for their present goals and policies.

At the end of the second day, morale within the workshop is generally low, although the participants seem to have grown a little tired of arguing about interpretation of past events, about who is 'to blame', and about who has more right on their side. It remains clear, however, that they are still more than ready to respond to 'verbal provocations' from the other side.

It is apparent to members of the panel that participants are unwilling to continue with the present frustrating process of accusation and counter-accusation, and need to be given some new direction or activity if they are to retain any interest in continuing the workshop process with any hope of a useful' outcome.

Exercise Task

Panel members and support staff of the workshop have gathered for their daily planning session on the second evening of the workshop. It is clear that the workshop is nearing the end of its first phase and that it now requires a clear initiative from the panel to direct it into a new and more fruitful inter-action, and to prevent the participants reverting to yet another round of accusation and counter-accusation in which they 'make a case' to the panel, and grow yet more frustrated with the process. All the panel members have taken notes and gathered large amounts of data about participants' views and perceptions about each other and about the conflict. Some form of activity is now needed to get the participants out of their present, confrontational pattern of interaction. It must be presented convincingly as arising naturally as an extension of the activities of Days 1 and 2, and it must not seem to be arbitrarily imposed by the panel on the participants. The theme or task needs to appear relevant and fruitful.

Discuss what activities might be suggested to the workshop tomorrow morning, and what rationale might be offered for pursuing particular lines of activity. Evaluate the pros and cons of each suggestion and determine which might be the one to be taken up in tomorrow morning's opening session. Have a second suggestion in reserve in case the participants completely reject the first.

What preparation (documents, taxonomies, handouts, diagrams or newsprint) might need to be prepared this evening for tomorrow morning? How will the proposal for new activities be presented? By whom? What will be the role played by this afternoon's chairperson? What roles will be assigned to individual panel members in tomorrow's crucial first meeting? How will the acceptance of the new direction by participants be judged?

What contingency arrangements need to be put in place if participants: (a) seem unhappy with the workshop's new direction; (b) insist upon continuing to confront and argue with each other as has been the case in Days 1 and 2?

Write up the notes of this evening meeting, summarizing decisions taken and reasons therefore. Prepare any documentation that might be needed for tomorrow morning. Be prepared to make a verbal report on your plans for the start of Day 3.

Exercise 8.3: Efforts to Manipulate the Workshop.

Background Discussion.

In spite of all efforts *before* a workshop, it may still be the case that participants arrive at the workshop site without the necessary degree of flexibility to carry forward a fruitful dialogue with the adversaries, moderated by the facilitating panel. It should be recalled that they will have been invited as individuals and not in any official or representative capacity. They will have been asked to avoid adopting official positions and 'posturing'. They will have been requested not to bring documents or books into the workshop with them. They will have been assured, several times, that discussions will be off the record and that there will be no publicity attached to the exercise, so that no 'points' can be scored from either attending the meeting with the adversary, or gaining 'concessions' during the discussion.

Nevertheless, it may still be the case that participants come into a workshop with their own very firm agendas, and that these will both interfere with the conduct of the workshop and may necessitate a change of strategy once such agendas become clear. This may occur immediately or after a couple of days of valuable workshop time. The problem is difficult when one set of participants attempts to manipulate the workshop process; it is even more of a problem when all the adversaries represented at the workshop are 'playing games' and have clearly come to the process solely in order to gain propaganda or other advantages in what they continue to regard as a win-lose confrontation.

Often this is difficult and disappointing for the facilitators, but they should always recall that there is no way in which they can impose their own agenda, process or objectives on determined participants; nor, in the last resort, should they try. However, such a situation does mean that they have to deal tactically (and tactfully) with activities by the participants designed to give one-sided advantages to themselves; and strategically with the task of obtaining a desirable outcome from a process that may have become dominated by 'point scoring' or by a clear determination on the part of at least some of the participants to emerge having humiliated or 'won' over others.

Exercise Scenario

Having successfully cleared up a number of minor problems in the initial stages of the first of your Centre's planned Zandia workshops, you are now at the end of the third day of that workshop and about to participate in the evening review and planning session. Things have not gone smoothly. Initial presentations passed off without any major 'explosions' anger, although at times the atmosphere was tense and one indignant member of the ALF 'team' walked out briefly' following a particularly 'obnoxious' (sic) comment by one of the Zandian participants.

The workshop has dealt with the participants' views of the original causes of the dispute and you have listened to long recitals of the various histories of the conflict, about the immorality and illegality of the other party's position and behaviour, and about the number of OAU and UN resolutions that have been passed on the Zandian conflict, only to be ignored or broken by the other side. Discussion has then passed on to the matter of current obstacles to any solution and thence, at the suggestion of the facilitators, to a very preliminary exploration of options for the future, both in the sense of potentially fruitful processes and mutually beneficial interim objectives.

This last process seems to have been particularly heavy going, and to have become a rather one-sided exchange between the Zandian and ALF participants. A pattern seems to have emerged of the ALF making long statements about future possibilities, which inevitably involve major concessions on the government side, and then including in their statement one two suggestions for short-term confidence-building measures, not linked in any way to the analysis of long-term ALF and Zandian interests and values developed during the first two days of the workshop.

The Zandian response has been to warn that the government will inevitably demand major concessions from the ALF before it will even begin to discuss or negotiate about goals and interests (one constant demand has been that the ALF lays down its arms before talks can even begin); and to denigrate, the few, low-key ideas for tension-reducing moves suggested by ALF participants.

Moreover, the pattern of exchanges between the participants has taken a hierarchical form, with one individual on each side acting as chief spokesperson for that side. Others have come to speak infrequently and only with the tacit 'permission' of that individual. Notes are passed to this emerging 'leader' when others want a point to be made. Several times the leading Zandian has cut off comments from one or other of the Zandian participants, so that the discussion has become stilted and slow.

Participants are obviously becoming highly frustrated by what all see as lack of progress, a frustration shared by the facilitation panel, and, late in the afternoon, there were several comments about intransigence, lack of progress, the need for fresh directions and the lack of competence of the facilitators. 'Why are we all here wasting our time?' was one comment. There is obviously a need for a new initiative.

Exercise Task

At the evening planning meeting, one of the panel says that he has been talking with an experienced workshop observer, and the latter is fairly convinced that the participants are acting under detailed instructions from their respective leaderships 'back home' regarding their conduct during the workshop. The emerging hierarchical pattern indicates that each party has had one person designated as the leader of the group, so that participants are not acting as flexible individuals but under major constraints and as part of a 'team of representatives' with instructions about what should and should not emerge from the workshop.

Moreover, it seems clear that the ALF participants have been told to use the workshop as a means of extracting some level of 'recognition' as viable negotiating partners from the Zandian participants, who are regarded by the ALF as an official 'delegation'; and to try out various possible initiatives that would either give them advantages in any long-term, tacit bargaining process, or enable them to score propaganda points from a Zandian refusal to respond to such 'concessions'.

In contrast, the Zandians have been instructed to 'stonewall', to listen to ALF suggestions, not to take any initiatives of their own at all, and to try to turn ALF participants' behaviour to whatever propaganda advantage they can.

The panel member reports that, in addition, he was talking (luring a break) with a Zandian participant who asked if he might be supplied with a copy of the facilitators' notes of the workshop - 'purely for my own academic interests, of course'. The panel member responded that this had not been usual workshop practice, but that he would raise the matter at the evening planning meeting.

Finally, another facilitator says that she has been approached by an ALF participant with a request that the ALF 'team' be allowed to show a video tape to all members of the workshop, or to the members of the facilitation panel at least. The tape, it was claimed, 'will show what the situation in Azania is really like', and will help to 'show the world' the nature of the Zandians' atrocious behaviour towards the people of Azania over the last two years. 'It is like Rwanda, like the Sudan - it is a holocaust ...' was the comment.

How do you deal with these immediate problems and what might be done to produce a useful outcome from the workshop, bearing in mind that you want to use this event to lay the foundation for a series of further workshops at which formal solutions might be explored and developed ?

Exercise 8.4: Listening for Issues.

Background Discussion.

One of the essential skills for all facilitators, irrespective of the process which they employ, is that of being able to listen to participants and, through careful analysis, being able to identify the issues that crucially underlie the conflict, at least as far as those participants are concerned.

Obviously, in many conflicts, members of adversary parties will often differ profoundly on 'what the conflict is about', and a fundamental aspect of many conflicts is that those involved will have differing views about 'the issues' in conflict.

Sometimes these differences are part of a considered strategy, as leaders of parties in conflict recognize that a particular definition of what are the essential issues in conflict will work to their advantage. If a conflict is 'about', for example, 'rights of self-determination', rather than 'a minority's efforts to secede', then many advantages accrue to one party to that conflict.

More often, there are genuine differences about what lies at the root of any protracted conflict, with parties holding widely differing perceptions about the reasons for the conflict having arisen, and the sources that underlie the development of their adversary relationship. At the least, parties will often differ about the relative importance of various issues; at the most, they will have completely incompatible explanations about what issues underlie their dispute.

Part of the third party's task, therefore, is to be able to analyse the parties' different views about what are (and what are not) key issues between them and, at a later stage of the process, to be able to 'feed back' this analysis to the parties in a fashion that both includes these differing views about key issues and makes sense to the participants. Being able to do this depends upon facilitators being able to listen hard and to detect 'covert', underlying issues as well as overt, 'surface' issues, both from what participants say and the way they say it - and sometimes, from what they do not say.

In CAPS exercises, skill in listening for issues is particularly important in the opening stages of a problem-solving workshop, when participants are invited to provide their own views about the underlying causes of the conflict and the reasons for it having reached its, usually, existing circumstances of violence, mistrust, hostility and intransigence. If the panel in such exercises is to help participants consider new options and alternatives, it is important that some acceptable and comprehensive 'mapping' of the issues in conflict be presented to the participants during a later stage of the workshop. It is thus crucial for panelists to hear accurately what participants say, to check what they have heard in a non-offending and non-confrontational manner, and later to be able to reflect the overall 'issue structure' in a clear and sympathetic fashion.

Exercise Scenario

After much time and effort, your Centre has persuaded the government of Zandia and the Azania Liberation Front, still fighting each other fiercely, if sporadically, in the north of Zandia, to attend the first of what you have intimated could be a useful series of problem-solving workshops on the conflict in their country. Eventually, both leaderships have agreed to nominate a number of possible unofficial participants, who would attend and then report back to their respective leaders about the results of the workshop. After some background investigations into the individuals on both lists, you have invited three from each list, and deliberately included people with a range of views about the conflict, including two individuals who have been characterized as 'extremists' by members of the other party.

The participants have arrived safely at a small conference centre affiliated with the Peace Research Institute at the University of Malta, which has strong links with your own University in Umea and has offered to host the meeting. They have rested for half a day and have then joined the four-person panel of facilitators for the opening stages of the workshop. Sitting at a round table, the participants have carefully remained in their own groups, and have been studiously polite to one another and to the panel, although the level of tension and suppressed hostility remains high. They are all obviously puzzled about the nature of the week's work ahead of them, and the facilitator's explanations and assurances of confidentiality have apparently not reassured them very much. They have asked several questions about procedure and have already had a sharp exchange about the degree to which each can trust the other side not to leak details of discussions and positions to the media.

However, they appear to be satisfied with the suggested ground rules for the workshop and have accepted the panel's suggestion of a broad and flexible six-stage agenda, which begins with members of both parties alternately presenting their views about the basic sources of the conflict and the reasons for the continuation of the fighting and violence.

There was some dissension over which party should make the initial presentation, but eventually this was sorted out by the panel suggesting that the oldest participant should begin and be followed by the oldest participant from the other group. This was agreed and the ALF has been given the opportunity to speak first.

*Note: It would be helpful if the statement could be recorded and then played over so that students could actually **listen to this (or another) opening statement, rather than reading it.***

TEXT OF OPENING STATEMENT

Lead Facilitator: Well, if that order of speakers is agreeable to everyone, then perhaps we should start. May I remind everybody that we agreed a while ago that these opening statements should be allowed to run uninterrupted, although we could ask questions, for clarification only, at the very end of each statement. There will be plenty of time for discussing each others' interpretations later in the day. Dr al Hussein, would you like to begin?

Dr al Hussein: Thank you, Mr Chairman. Ladies and gentlemen, I have been asked to give my views about the basic reasons for the current struggle that has developed in my country between those of us who believe in the right of a people to self determination, and others who seek to deny that right in order to maintain a historic domination -political, economic, and even cultural - that they have abused over the centuries, but particularly over the last thirty-five years, since gaining independence from European colonialists.

This is at once a simple and a difficult task. It is simple because the underlying reasons for the current dispute are relatively easy to see and evaluate. It is difficult, because presenting a full account of our long struggle against oppression and government inspired and organized violence, or even chronicling the long history of betrayals, broken promises and unfulfilled, so-called solemn agreements would occupy me for the remainder of this week.

Let me confine myself to the sad history of the last thirty-five years. Everyone here will know that, when the Italian mandate came to an end, the colonialists left behind a constitution for the newly independent Zandia that explicitly made allowance for the fact that Zandia was a diverse country of many peoples and cultures. We were hopeful that this constitution - to which all agreed, mark that - would signal a new beginning to the historical divisions between our people and those who, because of their fortunate geographical position in the coastal areas of our country, had controlled trade and commerce, had exploited the indigenous peoples of the interior and had - even under the Italians - dominated the political life of the country.

In the early colonial days, of course, the Italians had exploited these differences within the country and had encouraged the Christianization of the coastal peoples while leaving our own people to their religious practices. Even in the worst stages of colonial occupation, Islam remained our core and our comfort, and it still does. However, even the Italians recognized that we were a separate people and at independence explicitly gave a great deal of political power and authority, including control over the rubber and iron ore, to the new Regional Governments, which represented us as one people

Mr Blanco: This is ridiculous! You never have been one people, even when you ALF grabbed the north-east and talked about unity. There are at least three tribes and eight languages up there!

Lead Facilitator: I'm sorry, but could we keep comments and questions until the end of Dr al Hussein's statement? Thank you.

Dr al Hussein: I am used to this kind of behaviour. As I was saying, we began with a form of government that recognized that we were different, and had separate and special needs in our part of Zandia. Did you know, for example, that only five schools existed in our Region in 1980, compared with over seventy down country? What neglect! And what happened after the Italians had left? Within one year, the independence Constitution had been quite illegally amended, all real power had been concentrated in our capital, Zambasi, the Regional Governments had become a shell of what was intended, and shortly afterwards all political parties were abolished, apart from the ZPP which was under the domination of Mr. Okumu's uncle! We found ourselves powerless and at the mercy of people who cared nothing for justice, nothing for legality and certainly nothing for us. This situation lasted for over ten years of so-called 'democratically centralized development'! Well, for us, it was certainly centralized but there was no democracy and there was even less development; Zambasi grew, new presidential statues were erected, the proceeds from the rubber and the iron flowed down the Rio Negro and that was the last we saw of it! There were no schools built, the only roads led to and from the plantations and the mines, Cobora became the official language of the country, so that all government jobs were closed to us (even those in our own towns!) and our few young school graduates couldn't get into the National University. Within ten years, we had become non-people in our own country ...

Mr Okumu: Do we really have to sit here and listen to this tissue of lies and exaggerations? There certainly were not seventy schools in the coastal Regions; the Italians had neglected *everyone's* educational opportunities. Why don't you talk a bit about the banditry up around Habiya, or the tax collectors you murdered near Tereda?

Lead Facilitator: I should remind everyone that we did all agree to allow speakers to make their presentations without interruption at this first stage of our workshop. I know this may prove difficult, especially when contentious points are raised, but everyone will get a chance to speak at length, and these points can be raised then.

Second Facilitator: Yes, I have several points I would like to go back to and ask about in the open discussion, and I am trying to write them down so that I don't forget them later.

Mr Okumu: I'm sorry, Mr. Chairman, but I do find this so-called historical account very difficult to take sitting down.

Lead Facilitator: I appreciate that.

Dr al Hussein: If I may continue? Very well. Such was the situation in the north-east when the first of our three military coups took place. Some of us thought at first that things could not get worse, but we were wrong. Having the army in control really made no difference. The bulk of the officers were coast people and our few soldiers were rapidly retired or left of their own accord; some were probably assassinated in the aftermath of the second coup - the one where the Cabora junior officers took over - although we never really found out what happened to the two brigadiers. It was this second military regime that really started the planned violence and the repression, although the one that replaced it simply carried on their policies after a futile and ill-conceived attempt at 'reconciliation'. By this time - and I'm talking about the late 1980s and early 1990s now - some of our young men had gone into the bush and had started to fight back

Mr Blanco: Some of them went to North Korea for terrorist training.

Dr al Hussein: The army simply used this as an excuse to station garrisons in our territory, and to declare 'free fire zones' where more of our pastoralists could be murdered without anyone asking questions. People in the region became insecure, then they became terrified, then they left. I forget how many refugees are over the border in Samaale, but it's about 50 per cent of our population now, although some are coming back into the safe areas controlled by the ALF. Their return is going to be one huge problem if peace ever does come.

When the ALF first started up in the Samaale camps, I really think its leaders wanted to stay part of Zandia - perhaps to go back to the Independence Constitution, or to have some freedom to have a say in running their own affairs - some kind of guaranteed autonomy, although they were not at all sure who could guarantee anything given the record of both civilian and military regimes in Zambasi. Now, they have given that up as an unreachable dream. Mind you, it's not true that the ALF wants to secede and join Samaale - a few of the leaders might, but only a few, and that's a story mainly spread by the regime in Zambasi. What it now wants, as far as I can tell, is the chance for the people in the north-east to choose their own future and their own form of government - and that may include the right to say they want to become part of Samaale, although I personally doubt it. Why should they want to exchange one distant government for another? But that's just a personal view, you understand.

That's about all I want to say for the moment. You wanted know the basic causes and I think that's simple. We we denied the opportunity of becoming Zandians. Everyone talked about this at independence, but it's difficult to be Zandian if you are denied all opportunities, systematically exploited and then told you are not 'really' Zandian - just some second- or third-class something, in the country on sufferance. Your religion is seen as something that turns you into a suspect person, the government billets troops in your mosques, they make efforts to suppress your languages. You can hardly blame people for protesting and even for taking up arms in such circumstances. I don't blame any of the boys in the bush, or the so-called 'intransigent' ALF leaders. That's all, I think.

Exercise Task

Individually, examine the text of the opening statement carefully, and extract from it what seem to you to be key issues mentioned by the ALF speaker.

(a) Make a list of these issues, indicate those about which you clearly need to ask for more information, and jot down a number of non-offensive follow-up questions designed to elicit more information about the issue for your own and the other participants' benefit.

(b) Put the issues in some kind of 'order of importance' as indicated by the ALF speaker.

(c) Take the list of issues and categorize them in some fashion so that different types of issue are clustered together in some clear and helpful framework that will assist you and your fellow panel members in analysing the conflict.

(d) Compare your list, your ordering of issues, and your classification scheme with those developed separately by your fellow facilitators and arrive at some consolidated list of issues, an agreed order of importance (if possible) and one or more agreed analytical frameworks that should be useful in 'feeding back' to participants what you have heard, at a later stage of the workshop.

(e) Begin work on developing a format for re-presenting the issues to both sets of participants in a non-provocative and non-confrontational fashion, at some later stage of the workshop when the opportunity arises.

Exercise 8.5: Producing an Agree-able Text.

Background Discussion

In the later stages of many workshops, participants begin to feel that they have made some kind of progress towards a resolution, and, sometimes, that they would like this progress recorded in some form, so that new ideas or suggestions can - at least - be carried back to decision-makers in a similar format, so that both parties have the benefit of the same documentary record.

Often, participants are content with asking for the consultants to make their own confidential, outline Report of the proceedings, without attributing views or statements to individuals, so that this can be circulated among the participants and responded to. Being the consultants' Report, participants can deny any responsibility for its contents.

On other occasions, however, the participants look for some document that summarizes central aspects of their discussions, the implications of which they wish to explore in greater detail 'back home'. This document can take the form of a list of possible tension-reducing moves; a set of options for starting a more formal discussion or even a negotiation process; a set of simultaneous unilateral moves that might help break an *impasse*; an outline process for further progress towards a solution; or some interesting 'formula' that might offer the basis for a future solution.

The key principle is usually that this document, whatever its content, is in no way an agreement between the participants, even in an informal sense, and it usually implies no commitment beyond a willingness to take it home with them so that its contents can be studied and discussed within each party's decision-making circles. For this reason, participants often prefer that any summary document is drafted and, after (much) discussion, amended into its final form by the consultants and their facilitators. In other words, it is the facilitators' document, not the participants' or the parties', and it is thus unofficial, deniable and, in the last resort, ignorable.

Thus, one common task for the facilitators usually involves struggling to put a confusing mass of notes, ideas, suggestions, hints, 'trial balloons' and implications into a summary document that can form a fruitful basis for further discussion and amendment - and ultimate transmission back home - by a set of participants who will usually, by this stage of the workshop, be looking over their shoulders at the problems they may confront on their return.

Exercise Scenario

Your panel of facilitators has just spent an exhausting five days in the first of what you hope will be a series of problem-solving workshops on the Zandian conflict. Initially, tempers have frayed among the participants, accusations and counteraccusations been leveled, OAU Resolutions were quoted and misquoted, and on one occasion, on the second day, an ALF participant walked furiously from the room, vowing never to return. Eventually he was persuaded to come back by fellow members of the ALF.

Latterly, the workshop interactions have grown calmer, the hierarchical tendencies among the two groups of participants lessened, with individuals speaking more freely and spontaneously, and something like a discussion of 'Where do we go from here?' has developed. There was a relapse into accusation and name-calling when the discussions focused on 'present obstacles' to a solution, but switching the discussion to possible tension-reducing moves brought back a sense of purpose to the meeting, although nothing definite was decided about confidence-building moves.

In all this, the panel's role has been a rather more active one than some of its members have liked or felt comfortable with. One major difficulty has been to keep participants focused on the linkage between the sources of the conflict - fully thrashed out in an atmosphere of mutual recrimination during the first two days - and possible long-term remedies. You have lost count of the number of times that one facilitator or another has emphasized the principle that 'Solutions have to deal with root causes' if a lasting solution is to be found - if not in those exact words, at least in some version of them.

The result of the last few days has been that all the facilitators and observers on the Planning Group have over 30 pages of notes and are suffering, in some cases, from writer's cramp.

During today's late afternoon session, the participants agreed that they did have a great deal in common, although there continued to be profound differences about what they wanted for their people and for Zandia as an independent African country. Hence, they have suggested that it might be an interesting exercise if the panel were to summarize '...the positive aspects of our discussions ...' in a short document that sets out a number of basic principles on which '... a settlement might be negotiated ...'

'... Surely there is a framework here that we can all agree upon ...' was the comment of one Zandian participant (who had spent the entire first two days of the workshop arguing that the whole exercise was a pointless waste of time).

'... I am sure our facilitator colleagues can put together some interesting ideas for our first session tomorrow morning...' agreed an ALF participant.

Your lead facilitator has agreed, rather too readily, that you would be happy to produce a document for tomorrow's discussion.

Exercise Task

It is 6.30 in the evening of the fifth day of the Zandian workshop. You and the rest of the Planning Group are slumped over coffee in the seminar room you have been using for evening meetings. You need to produce a short (10 to 15 point) summary document containing a set of basic and mutually agreeable principles on which the details of a solution to the conflict between the Zandian Government and the ALF might be constructed.

The participants have not made it clear whether the principles should concern the nature of a solution, or the processes by which it should be achieved, or both. You need to decide yourselves on this issue.

Apart from your 30 pages of notes, you have begun to sketch out some of the main points about which there seems to be general agreement round the table and which might be used as a basis for a draft framework document (see the sketch below).

Draft a document entitled 'Principles for a Future Zandia' that might command some agreement among the participants at tomorrow morning's session, and which might form the basis of some agreed principles for a settlement to be taken back by participants when they return the day after tomorrow.

Notes for an Outline Document

'The Vision of a (Future?) Peaceful Zandia' ??? or 'Principles on which to Base a Settlement of Zandian Conflict.'

Azadians resentful of gvt calling in outsiders to support their 'repressive' efforts (aid from Italy, Nigeria and N. Korea?); similar view by gvt of Islamic countries calling for recognition of 'rights of self-determination' seen as interference in Zandian domestic affairs.

Shared resentment of vestiges of colonialism; trade diversification agreeable; get away from 'Italian stranglehold' (quote from Okumu).

Both sides want to 'preserve traditional cultures' in the country (probably includes religions) at the same time as both feel that war interferes with 'modernization' (a bit contra- Trouble is they are talking about different traditions which have been historically antithetical. Coast people's long memories of northerners' role in 19th-century slave trade. Azadians obviously resent this constant accusatory attitude. ('That was over 100 years ago; what has it to do with us, here and now?') Both al Arabi and Hassouna said something like this.)

Azadians all feel that they have been denied opportunity to be Zandian; trouble is, these Zandians still, after 5 days, seem to feel that Azadians don't really want to be Zandian; aren't really committed to Zandian unity. What does 'being Zandian' mean?

Neither side trusts the other further than the end of the street! Constant harping on broken promises, violated truces, agreements that weren't kept. Also on need for guarantees and someone to be a guarantor of any agreement. Azadians don't trust the OAU (don't think some of the Zandians do, either; why is this?) Oddly enough, both seem to have positive feelings towards Italians, even allowing for the religious/missionary factor.

Issue of security central to both. (Security for what/whom, from what? Obviously results of having semi-controlled troops around for one thing, but the fear goes deeper than this.) Neither seems to have given any thought to the idea of interdependent security or mutual security, or to the problem that security for one side, e.g. high arms levels, represents insecurity for the other. Who can provide security (1) in the short term and (2) in the long run? You can't base a country on a mutual threat system, at least not in the long run!

Whole dilemma seems to turn on reconciling interest in continuing unity of the country (meaning what - the place is split by a civil war???) with that of self-determination, but the latter seems to fall short of secession when one really gets down to it. On the surface the Azadians seem willing to consider unity with Samaale, but underneath they are really not too happy with this idea. Probably a case of 'the devil you know'. Is there a distinction between having the right to self-determination and not wishing to exercise that right? Autonomy - how much and over what? Unity in diversity? Even Blanco seems to recognize that Zandia is a diverse country and cannot be treated as though the population was utterly homogenous.

Everyone seems to share the dislike and distrust of the military (hardly surprising as all are civilians - should we have invited a couple of soldiers? - also given the record of the Zandian army in the mid-1 970s ...) Hassouna said at one point that a future Zandia should really aim to become like Costa Rica (what are they going to do with all the soldiers under arms at the moment if they ever decide to try to abolish the military? Well, they can cross that bridge if they ever come anywhere near it!)

Nobody raised the issue of religious differences or took up one Zandian's point about signs of Islamic fundamentalism appearing in Samaale. How come? Were they avoiding this, is it really not an issue, or is it too sensitive even to raise in front of outsiders or foreigners? We need to explore this further.

Apart from Costa Rica, the country they mentioned most as a parallel was Nigeria - the odd reference to Switzerland, I suppose in connection with local autonomy and having three, or is it four, languages. Nobody liked the Nigerian military very much, but at least they seemed to feel that Nigeria offered a model of reconciliation after a civil war and real efforts to maintain a single country while granting autonomy to various regions and religions. (Okumu and Warati both said they thought the Nigerians had blown opportunities by constantly redrawing internal boundaries and giving in to small minority groups.)

Not much about the economic side of things, apart from trade tied to one European partner, except for a general agreement that the country needed to diversify, get aid from a variety of sources and distribute development more equitably. Azanian perception of continuing historical neglect and their underdevelopment at the expense of the coast - but Zandians denied this and argued that everyone was underdeveloped. Blamed the Italians, the war and the IMF (everyone hates the IMF). Someone quoted Julius Nyerere: 'A fair share of what little we have.'

What agree-able principles on which to (re)build a country?

Alternative Exercise Task

You have conducted a successful set of simulated workshop discussions focused on the conflict you have chosen to analyse and try to resolve. You have taken notes on the discussions that have taken place between the participants in your workshop and the facilitating panel, and have added these to the information that you had already collected on the conflict, as background to the exercise.

Your present task is to use this information to construct a discussion document entitled: 'A Framework for Settlement: Agreed Principles on which a Long-Term Solution to the X Conflict Might be Sought'. Apart from the title, your workshop Planning Group has already composed the following first paragraph:

'... Emerging from the five days of intensive and realistic discussions of the conflict involving _____ and _____ and recognizing the difficulties still awaiting any attempt to move towards a resolution of this protracted and tragic conflict, it is suggested that the following principles could form the basis for a permanent solution to the conflict:

(1)

Complete the draft document in time for tomorrow's session of the workshop.

Exercise 8.6: The Continuing Issue of Confidentiality.

Background Discussion.

One of the continuing problems involved in conducting problem-solving exercises is the issue of maintaining confidentiality and reassuring participants that material from or reports about the workshop in which they are involved will not find their way back into the media or general public knowledge within their own country, community or party. Without this continued reassurance, participants will not feel free to step outside their representative role, reveal aspirations and concerns to members of their adversary, and speculate freely about possible future options, scenarios or solutions.

In general, and given the sensitivities that often surround the issue of 'meeting with the enemy', all participants at least will usually share an interest in maintaining confidentiality, and will expect the consultants and their facilitators to ensure their safety from 'exposure' in the media and from accusations of gullibility or treachery.

The continued credibility of the third party depends, therefore, on keeping confidential, if possible, the fact that the meetings are taking place, the identity of the participants or, at the very least, the content of the discussions. Maintaining a minimal level of confidentiality is doubly important if it is hoped to conduct any exercise consisting of a number of workshops or other meetings.

Exercise Scenario

In spite of numerous setbacks, and in spite of the commitments made in the Alva Accord, your institution has managed to obtain a commitment from the core parties in the Etrurian conflict that they will not prevent individuals '... able to represent their views, positions and aspirations ...' from attending a series of three problem-solving workshops. The first one is to be focused on an exploration of the conditions necessary to establish a multilateral and limited truce in the 'armed struggle'.

After considerable time and effort on your part, and numerous visits to Lusitania and Etruria, you finally have issued invitations to a number of individuals who are prominent members of the four major political parties in Etruria (ASDL, PNE, PAVE and APE), none of whom, however, are officials in the PNE/ASDL coalition currently forming the Regional Government of Etruria. It is clear that all participants have close links with their top leaders, while one of the ASDL participants has close personal connections with the Deputy Minister of National Security in the Lusitanian capital. The individuals who are members of PAVE tend to belong to the 'hawkish' wing of the party and - it is rumoured - have good lines of communication to the guerrilla organization, POME, which continues its bomb attacks in Etruria and in the national capital.

All are clearly nervous about their participation in this first workshop, in spite of the consultants' reassurances that none of the details of any of the meetings will become public and a clear prior agreement, reiterated and agreed again on the first morning of the workshop, that all at the workshop will maintain complete confidentiality with regard to its proceedings.

Exercise Task

After dinner on the evening of the fourth day of the workshop, a very vulnerable member of PNE, a lawyer with a prominent practice in the regional capital of Etruria, comes to you and says that friends in Etruria have informed him that reports of the discussions (naming individual persons and linking them with views and positions) are being leaked to conservative members of the coalition government back in Etruria.

He is worried about these reports and feels very threatened by them, anticipating that it will only be a matter of time, and probably a very short time, before some of this material, much of it apparently reasonably accurate, appears in the highly partisan Etrurian press.

He says that he will withdraw from the exercise at once, unless he can be assured that his statements and views will be kept confidential, and that everyone at the workshop will '... provide cast-iron guarantees at the end of the week ...' that absolutely nothing now occurring in the workshop will be revealed '... to people back home

What do you say to him?

What actions do you take?

CHAPTER 9.

THE RESULTS OF THE WORKSHOP

1. Re-entry and Follow-up

With the workshop completed, the representatives of the parties return to whatever their home organizations may be, and the panellists go back to their overdue correspondence, their piles of unread books and papers, their irritated students. As far as the practical procedures involved in the mounting of a single workshop rather than the first of a planned series are concerned, the main part of the job is complete.

But in the academic debate over problem solving and the use of analytical workshops, now two or three decades old, there has been much worry about what happens next. Critics ask: What about the 're-entry' problem? Will not the homecoming party representatives bum out in the abrasive political atmosphere of the continuing conflict situation 'back home' ? Inevitably, the atmosphere that he or she must re-enter is going to be highly charged. There is the friction of fear, the inflammatory suspicion that 'their representative' is no longer theirs. There will almost certainly be perception that participants have been the subject of skilled third-party manipulation.

There are a number of ways of minimizing this 're-entry problem', but the most effective involves the basic nature of the return itself, for the returning participant should not be the bearer of implausibly good tidings. There should be no claim that all can be resolved by the contents of the signed piece of paper triumphantly brought back from 'the negotiations'. Often, there are few 'good tidings', save for the reassurance that there are, indeed, people, on 'the other side' with whom it might be possible to discuss underlying issues further - and in a not wholly unreasonable fashion.

Equally often, there is no piece of paper, although sometimes workshops have produced agreed lists of principles on which a solution might be based, or notes about future options, or about types of future action that it might be helpful to avoid.

Hopefully, participants return cold and sober, as enhanced realists. They know with greater clarity the nature of the situation that their parties mutually confront. For at least one reason, they are likely to be welcome, for they have gathered 'intelligence' - the most valuable intelligence that a party in conflict could conceivably possess in such a dangerous and uncertain relationship. Workshop participants have had a glimpse of the future. And so have their opposite numbers, across on the other side.

It is, of course, not just one future but several alternative futures. What a successful workshop should have achieved is to show which of these are impossible, which are disastrous, which are barely tolerable, which are the ones to work towards. Among them, the choice is there for the parties to make. What a successful workshop has demonstrated is that the parties do have a choice. They are not trapped by fate. They can take control of their own future.

In taking control, the returning party representatives can have a crucial role to play. To some degree, they can replay, within the decision-making procedures of their own party, the role played by the panellists within the workshop - asking questions, drawing out implications and emphasizing costs and risks. However, there is a major difference. Participants are taking sides, knowing where they want their party to go. And they have the arguments to back up their case, learned from the best possible source - the representatives of the opposing party, who have available exactly the same arguments to use in the councils of their own organization.

This is not to argue that participants face an easy task on their return, nor that some steps might not be taken at the workshop to ease the mutual problems they are likely to confront at 're-entry'. Indeed, as we have discussed briefly in Chapter 8, in the final stages of many workshops it is possible to observe participants mentally preparing for the return home as they realize that they must shortly give an account of the meeting, the discussions and their part in them. In the final period of many workshops there are signs of rhetoric returning, behaviour becoming more intransigent, stereotypes reappearing, and stances reverting to the hardline, 'official' positions of the first days of the process.

To a large degree, this 'preparing for re-entry' stage can be anticipated and defused by the panel's ability to provide an analysis of the stages of the workshop process itself, to reassure participants that they confront a normal phenomenon, and to use its appearance as a way of leading into the question of what the adversaries round the table might be able to do (or, sometimes, not do) in order to ease each other's return home to 'politics as usual' and 'conflict as normal'.

The answer to this question is clearly dependent upon the relative success of the workshop and the nature of the 'output' that participants might be taking home with them. But specific understandings may be less valuable than a sense of reassurance about the possibility of reaching some mutually acceptable solution in the future; a deeper appreciation of the goals, constraints and obstacles faced by the other side; and an awareness of a range of mutually acceptable parameters within which a future solution might be sought.

In a few cases some more definite output may have been developed. This could involve a framework of mutually agreeable principles for some settlement, a list of suggested tension reducing or mutually reassuring measures, a number of possible formulae for dissolving an impasse, or a proposal for a process which official discussions could begin.

Particularly in this last case, a final task for participants in workshop might well be to discuss and agree what might be done to make each other's task easier in taking the workshop's output home to decision-makers who are inevitably cautious, usually skeptical and sometimes downright dismissive. They will have to be convinced of the realism of analysis undertaken at a workshop of which they have not been part, and persuaded to accept the utility of the ideas or options emerging from it. To some degree, this last discussion of how achieve these goals can be a test of the success of the workshop. If participants can co-operate in helping to ease each other's return, then it is an indicator that they have achieved:

- (1) a measure of ability to start empathizing with some of constraints faced by decision-makers within their adversary, and
- (2) a degree of trust that enables them to consider mutual ways overcoming some of those anticipated constraints and difficulties.

At the very least, some agreement should be possible about who are appropriate recipients of the workshop's outputs on both sides, and about the maintenance of confidentiality outside those agreed recipients, even if this can only be for a mutually acceptable time period. Nothing destroys any positive effects from a workshop in building trust more effectively than rapid, public revelations about the holding of a workshop, about the participants, about the workshop's agenda and about its outcome - particularly if these are released with a partisan slant to claim credit, or to pre-empt or undermine others' claims for credit.

In addition, there is often an inclination on the part of those attending a successful and stimulating workshop to want to announce that success, frequently for positive symbolic reasons. They may wish to show that mutually beneficial contacts are possible, for example, or to indicate that hopeful alternatives to continuing coercion, damage and destruction might exist. But experience suggests that public announcements should be avoided, and the commitment to confidentiality with which the overall process began should be maintained and reinforced by at least a tacit agreement at the end of the workshop to continue to maintain confidentiality. This is particularly significant if further workshops are planned or possible.

At a more positive level, the closing stage of the workshop can involve participants in a discussion of helpful ways in which the other side's representatives might be aided in presenting the workshop output on their return. There can be discussions about which types of action or statement should be avoided for some time after return. Conversely, positive future acts by participants might be discussed, and optimum modes of presentation of workshop output agreed. Paradoxically, it may help one side if the other emphasizes the 'realistic' nature of the discussions and the committed, but not utterly unreasonable, stance of the adversary. Awareness of the opposition's true stance and commitment can often assist representatives in making a credible case for new ideas and future options to their own decision-makers.

In the longer term, participants might also discuss the start of symbolic 'bridge-building' activity, such as the production of analytical papers or journal articles that make use of new insights gained or possible options developed during discussions; the establishment of new organizations to pursue other forms of mutually beneficial interaction across existing divisions and cleavages; or simply the maintenance of a channel of communication between workshop participants, once all have returned to their home bases. The main point, however, is to spend some time at the end of the workshop during which participants think together about the problems presented by one another's return to the reality of the conflict 'back home'; and how they might assist each other in overcoming such problems, even if the problems simply take the form of a body of pressmen and a phalanx of television cameras waiting at the airports of both capitals.

SEE EXERCISE 9.1

2. Outcome and Assessment

The consultants will also be observing the re-entry of the participants with some concern. Even the most successful workshop is ultimately pointless if the insights gained from the interactions on site cannot be successfully and credibly transmitted to decision-makers within the adversary parties. Unfortunately, consultants are limited in the support they can provide to returning participants in the tough discussions that follow the latter's return to the scene of the conflict. Immediately following the workshop, it can be helpful for consultants to communicate with those decision-makers who originally authorized participants' attendance, commenting on the success of the workshop and outlining in general terms its achievements, if these are mutually agreed by workshop participants. The matter of producing a summary Report for limited circulation needs to be discussed before participants leave and, if one is desired, a first draft of this should be sent to

participants for their comments as soon as practical. Follow-up visits both to participants and to their formal officials can be a valuable part of the overall process, and can play a major role in maintaining the credibility of the exercise, of the organization undertaking it, and of any output from the workshop. Finally, consultants should be prepared to continue to act as a trusted channel of communication among workshop participants, reinforcing and continuing the sense of having shared a unique and useful experience, and possibly preparing the ground for further meetings, either in the second of a workshop series or more informally in other settings.

The consultants face another equally daunting task, however. This is to assess what effect the workshop or the overall problem solving exercise has actually had on the conflict it was designed to help resolve. Tracing through the results of a problem-solving exercise is always difficult. In principle, of course, it is no more and no less difficult than tracing through the effects of any form of intervention - diplomatic, economic, military - into a complex system of parties, relationships and interactions. To the diplomat's question 'How do you know your workshop has had any effect on this conflict?', the consultant's justifiable answer is 'In much the same way that you know that your diplomatic initiative has had an effect !' But there is a shortage of benchmarks. So far, there are few, if any, examples of a problem-solving exercise that has, on its own, produced a resolution of a complex and protracted conflict. The most optimistic consultants will only claim, at best, to have made a 'major contribution' to particular peace processes. Evaluation is a matter of explaining and measuring that contribution. Tracing through the impact of an exercise, or of a particular workshop, is, therefore, a challenge but it is an integral and necessary part of the overall problem-solving process. Consultants cannot and should not avoid a retrospective evaluation of their work.

At its simplest, evaluating the impact of a problem-solving exercise involves consultants in two questions. Firstly, they need to ask about the types of change they need to observe to be able to claim that their input has had any effect on the conflict they seek to resolve. Secondly, they need to ask about the methods by which appropriate data might best be gathered. There are obvious difficulties in answering both questions, given the principle of confidentiality enshrined in the problem-solving method itself and the resultant constraints on record keeping, follow-up data gathering and the availability of evidence about sensitive and politically dangerous matters. However, consultants cannot escape this final task of assessing effects, if they are to improve the practice of analytical problem solving and develop its underlying theory beyond the level of being an untestable and overly optimistic hunch.

In assessing the effects of an exercise from the point of view of the nature of any change it brings about, we have found it helpful to distinguish three levels of change that might, or might not result from a problem-solving exercise (see Mitchell, 1993 for a discussion of these three 'levels'). A successful exercise will therefore need to involve some follow-up studies of changes:

- (1) In the workshop participants (the impact)
- (2) From the workshop itself (the output)
- (3) In the behaviour of and relationship between the parties (the outcome).

At all three levels, consultants are involved in a process of carrying out what might colloquially be called a 'before and after' assessment. At the participant level, the *impact* of the workshop involves the issue of whether, and to what extent, participants have changed their perceptions of the conflict in which they are engaged, of the adversaries, of potential outcomes, and of options for future activity. In the case of the workshop's *output*, what has changed is the existence of some material or intellectual 'product' (a list of principles, a draft of suggested confidence-building measures), which did not exist before the workshop. At the level of the conflict itself, the *outcome* of the workshop might be indicated by some change of tactics or strategy by one or both parties, by a change in the rhetoric used by leaders, by the use of new concepts or ideas in statements by leaders, by the actual use of familiar (to participants) reassurances or tension-reducing measures, or official adoption of agreements, formulae or statements of principles developed during a workshop.

The availability of means to carry out such assessments varies considerably and some are, indeed, constrained by the nature of the problem-solving approach. Consultants undertaking an exercise are, by definition, dealing with sensitive issues and sensitive parties, the latter being particularly and rightly resistant to being treated as the subject of some quasi-scientific study. They are in a situation involving danger, destruction and often death and are understandably resentful of anyone using those costly and often tragic circumstances to carry out research.

However, we have found that it is possible to carry out assessments of the effects of problem solving, particularly if this is built into the overall process, and the consultants present it as a necessary part of improving the service of consultancy and the quality of future problem-solving efforts.

In past cases, assessing the impact of a workshop on participants has often been successfully carried out by asking for subsequent feedback. This can be gathered in follow-up conversations on what participants feel they have learned that is useful from being part of problem-solving exercises; from more structured interviews; from subsequent conferences focused on the utility of problem solving; and, in certain

cases, from being able to administer surveys and questionnaires following a workshop or even more rarely, both before and after the workshop experience.

SEE EXERCISE 9.2

Delineating the output from a problem-solving workshop is an easier matter, although the need to keep such products confidential militates against much comparative assessment of problem-solving exercises carried out in different conflicts, or even in the same conflict over a period of time. Put simply, the workshop either results in a product or not. Many do not, in which case the consultants are left with the difficult task of trying to link the impact on participants directly with the workshop's effects on the conflict itself, the latter being by far the most difficult level to assess. However, even at the level of an output it is important for consultants to build in a process of review and assessment at the end of each workshop, and again at the end of a complete exercise. This is often easier said than done, given that it is often difficult, practically, to involve busy panel members in any assessment of 'what went on' in a workshop, what effects it had, and what the overall output of the workshop (intellectual rather than practical) was likely to have been. However, in the past we have been able to build in various review processes as part of a problem-solving exercise, and found that some combination of the following might be used fruitfully:

- (1) The appointment of a project or workshop 'historian' to observe and evaluate the course of the enterprise, turning points, changes and effective change processes.
- (2) The holding of review sessions at the end of each day's interaction, together with a longer evaluation session once the workshop has come to a close.
- (3) The prior provision of clear and specific criteria to identify significant changes in both participant behaviour and workshop interaction during the period of the workshop.
- (4) Requests that all panel members submit evaluations of the workshop, once they have had time to reflect on the experience and assess its short term impact. This can be done individually or according to some standardized set of questions that focuses attention on what the consultants hypothesize to be key aspects of the process.
- (5) Follow-up conversations, or standard interviews, with participants, once they have returned safely to their homes and have had time to reflect on their experiences in the workshop and on the results of their re-entry into the ongoing conflict.

Methods similar to the last should be used to try to trace through the effects of the workshop on the conflict itself. It is obviously the case that workshop impacts or outputs can only have an effect on the subsequent course of the conflict if they have some effects on the parties' decision-making processes. This means that the task of the consultants at this level is to try to trace through the impact, or lack of impact, via interviews, wherever possible with decision-makers.

Objective methods of scholarship can also be used, foremost among them being a close empirical analysis of the course of the conflict immediately after the exercise. In our experience, dramatic changes seldom occur, so one must look for indicators such as changes in the tone of public statements, the easing of restrictions, the adoption of new labels and concepts, the utilization of ideas or suggestions, or the gradual, public adoption of principles. These are typical of the indicators of success that most workshops produce. Public acknowledgements by leaders or statesmen' as in the case of the Oslo Process in 1993, are likely to be as rare as Nobel Peace Prizes, so alternative evidence of workshop effects must be sought and the course of the conflict closely monitored for signs and indications, which will inevitably be small. Perhaps many years later it will prove possible to retrace one's steps with those directly involved at the official level and see whether a problem-solving exercise held twenty years ago did, indeed, have the impact that was hoped.

SEE EXERCISE 9.3

3. Workshop Series and 'Continuing' Workshops

All of the above tasks associated with re-entry and evaluation attend each problem-solving workshop, whether it occurs as a single, isolated event or as part of a linked set. However, being or becoming part of a series of workshops does add to the list of tasks to be carried out at the end of each meeting.

If the participants' interest and enthusiasm have been aroused, there may be suggestions to repeat the workshop soon, or after certain turning-points in the relations between the adversaries have been achieved (a truce, or an electoral agreement, for example). In such circumstances, agreement in principle needs to be reached about whether to hold another workshop or not and, if so, when, where, and for what purposes. Follow-up activities must be agreed and co-ordinated, at least at the minimal level of permitting the third party to explore the possibilities of another workshop once the results of the first have been evaluated.

Issues of the expansion of membership must be raised, at least in a preliminary fashion. In some recent workshops, participants have proved wary of including other stakeholders or representatives of other parties in subsequent meetings, in spite of the obvious relevance of the latter to hopes for any lasting solution. It is almost as though participants recognize the fragile nature of the trust engendered between them, and are frightened that the introduction of 'new members', who have not been through the 'bridgebuilding' experiences of the initial meeting, will wreck their hardwon ability to talk openly and safely about the conflict, and their own goals, aspirations, obstacles and viable options. Consultants will need to take such sensibilities into account when pressing the idea of expanding the membership of the next workshop in a developing series. They will also need to be patient and to urge patience on others, when the inevitable delays arise in arranging another meeting.

Similar difficulties attend the re-entry and follow-up processes in 'continuing' workshops, which also present their own particular practical and logistical problems at the end of each successful meeting. For example, it often proves difficult to assemble exactly the same set of participants at meetings held at long intervals, even though their presence has the advantage of ensuring that it is not necessary to repeat the processes of venting and trust-building that are characteristic of the early stages of workshops when participants are unfamiliar to one another. In the same way, the introduction of new participants, or voices from an increased number of parties, can be particularly tricky in continuing workshops. It may be necessary to create preliminary agreements that such a change is acceptable, and to build consensus around the processes for deciding if and when it should occur. Finally, there is always the chance that a continuing workshop might see some of its participants become involved in more formal or official interactions part way through the exercise. Ironically, the more successful a workshop, the more likely this is, but it poses significant problems of mixing levels and procedures for the overall peace process, and it may require individual participants to play incompatible roles.

4. Planning for the Future of Collaborative Problem Solving

Whatever the difficulties, it seems clear that the chances of having a significant effect on any complex, protracted conflicts are likely to be greatly increased by problem-solving exercises that go beyond a single workshop, and involve either an open-ended series or a continuing sequence, meeting over a planned time period. Inevitably, it will also be the case that problems of assessing the results of both the components of the series and the overall exercise are themselves multiplied. Arrangements for making an evaluation of impact, outputs and, above all, outcome will have to be carefully considered and planned before the initial workshop, with a built-in expectation that they will need to be modified in the light of experience.

However, it is becoming increasingly apparent that the use of exercises involving multiple workshops, despite the attendant problems of complexity, will be the most likely development of problem-solving approaches, given that their main focus is on efforts to resolve or, at least, ameliorate violent, protracted and deep-rooted conflicts. The problem-solving approach is not a simple package deal, something to be done just once with a single set of participants and then forgotten. It has to be a complex and sustained process. In any one 'conflict' there are many issues, many parties and many levels. There are internal disputants and there are usually external interveners with their own complicating agendas. At the grass-roots, there are collections of weary people struggling; at the level of high politics there are desperate groups battling out the tough decision-making inevitable in violent and protracted conflict.

For all of these reasons, work involving the planning, carrying through and evaluation of problem-solving exercises will clearly continue into the future. Protracted conflicts and violence are never absent from human society, and it is NOT the case that consultants using and advocating problem-solving approaches hold that it is ever possible wholly to abolish or resolve human conflict. Their shared belief is merely that many individual conflicts can be ameliorated and some (many of those otherwise judged intractable or insoluble) can be resolved and the adversaries' relationship transformed by using this approach.

The further development, testing and refining of collaborative problem-solving exercises and workshop methods is ultimately the most valuable follow-up of any individual problem-solving exercise, and one worthy of the amount of time, effort and resources it will inevitably involve. The present Handbook, therefore, merely represents an interim account of a changing and developing practice and it should be used tentatively. Moreover, readers should be cautioned not to regard this as the final word on how to conduct problem-solving exercises, nor should they imagine that, having read the Handbook and undertaken the exercises, that they are now qualified to go off and intervene in the deep-rooted conflicts in Chicago, or in Colombia or in Darfur. In these and all other cases, caution, sensitivity and experience are necessary and the last can only be gained by becoming part of some institution that has an established practice and a track record of using collaborative, applied, problem-solving techniques.

In spite of such cautions, however, a problemsolving approach, whether using workshops, facilitated dialogues, interactive consultations or any other structured process, offers great hope for the future. It can

help parties enmeshed in protracted and violent conflict devise acceptable and durable solutions to what might otherwise seem wholly intractable situations, totally resistant to more conventional approaches.

Hopefully, this interim account has indicated how this currently unconventional process might contribute to the resolution of even the most intractable, protracted, and seemingly hopeless conflict. It will need to be wholly re-written in a few years' time, but that, surely, will be an indication of the success of this approach.

Exercise 9.1: Preparing for Return and 'Re-entry'.

Background Discussion.

At the end of each and every workshop there is a tendency for participants to become a little uneasy at the prospect of returning 'home', an uneasiness that may be compounded by the fact that they are carrying back some innovative and hence threatening ideas, or even a draft document suggesting some new options or strategies.

One last task for the panel may, therefore, be to devote a session to what participants intend to do on their return, and what might be done to help one another through the 're-entry' process. This may be unnecessary, but at least the matter has to be raised and discussed. The problem may be minimal (e.g. How to deal with the media?) but, again, it needs to be raised. It may prove a significant problem for one or even both sets of representatives, in which case serious discussions and probably some commitments need to be worked out before the workshop finally disperses.

Exercise Scenario

It is the sixth and final day of the first Zandian workshop, and, after much debate and discussion of the actual wording of the provisions in the facilitator's draft document, both Zandian and ALF participants are more or less happy with the principles for settlement outlined in a 'Consultants' Draft' - now entitled somewhat grandiosely 'A Vision for Future Peace and Tranquillity in a United Zandia'!

During the discussions of this document, and what to do with it, it has become increasingly apparent that some participants - especially on the Zandian government side - have been becoming more and more worried about the idea of taking such a document back to Zandia with them, and what will be done with it when they get there. Moreover, all the participants seem worried about what the other side will do, on their return, and what the implications of allowing them to take a workshop document back with them might be.

Gradually, a number of themes have emerged in the discussion, involving underlying worries such as:

- (1) Should anyone take any document back at all ?
- (2) If so, should it be this draft of principles for a settlement or something else - and, if so, what ?
- (3) If we decide to take this particular piece of paper back, how can we minimize our vulnerability to criticism (and even danger) when we unveil it ?
- (4) Who should we agree to unveil it to, and how?
- (5) What must we try to insist the others do - and don't do - when *they* get back, and how can we be sure they will do what they say they will ?
- (6) Can the consultants help in any of this ?
- (7) How did we get into this mess, anyway ?

Alternative Background Scenario

For the purposes of this exercise, assume that the discussions held in your workshop have, after a great deal of hard work and compromise on everyone's part, finally arrived at some common agreements of principle OR a list of suggested tension-reducing measures that involve simultaneous unilateral actions including a one-month truce (its renewal contingent on the opening of formal 'talks about talks').

Everyone has taken relatively clear notes about what has been agreed under a number of broad headings and has checked that all have a shared understanding of what the notes actually say and mean. It is clear from this process that some participants appear to have agreed to a suggested scheme that involves their party in rather more 'concessions' than the other side, but the former have agreed to go along with the process on the assurance that fresh advantages will become obvious to them and to their leaders once the process is under way.

One question that now arises concerns the final form which these agreements in principle might take when they are taken back from the talks, which we will assume have remained confidential at least as far as the details of issues discussed are concerned to the leaders and constituents of the various parties.

Exercise Task

YOU are a member of the facilitating panel for the workshop OR of one of the two teams of participants representing the conflicting parties.

The panel have requested participants to retire to their teams to work on the above set of problems and to present suggestions for re-entry arrangements to the full workshop, which will re-convene when all teams are ready with their final drafts of the document and with some suggestions about its most effective use. All three groups (panel and participants) are working on this matter.

It is of prime importance to work on ideas for the safe and trouble-free re-entry of all participants to their own parties. Getting any new ideas accepted will be difficult, so you need to produce a scheme that will involve some mutually supportive moves by each set of participants to help the others:

- (1) Re-legitimize their original participation in the talks.
- (2) Sell the idea of a framework for a settlement and a new, short-term relationship, given that all parties have their intransigent opponents of compromise, and their hardline supporters.
- (3) Get any draft document accepted and acted upon.

In the two groups of adversaries, it is especially important to consider not only the difficulties one's own participants are likely to encounter on re-entry, and how to deal with these at each stage of the re-entry process, but also the likely difficulties of the others and how such difficulties might be minimized by one's own future actions and those of the entire set of participants.

Members of the facilitating panel need to consider ideas whereby all parties' representatives can be helped to re-enter successfully and have a draft document, which will inevitably be unpopular in some circles, supported by enough key people so that it can be acted upon and followed up.

What are needed, therefore, are some ideas (1) about ways of helping each other to legitimize the agreements reached with their own constituents and (2) about tacit or explicit agreements among participants and third parties concerning 'safety procedures' in the event of the re-entry process taking a significantly negative turn.

Produce a list of suggestions.

Exercise 9.2: Assessing the Effects of the Workshop.

Background Discussion.

Academics and others who conduct problem-solving exercises are constantly being criticized by their colleagues for their 'secrecy', even though this is necessitated by guarantees of confidentiality usually given to participants; and their lack of 'scientific rigour', in that there is no way that anyone else can check up on claims that this workshop or that exercise has had some important effects directly on the workshop participants and indirectly on the conflict itself.

There is some justification for such criticisms, particularly as those conducting problem-solving exercises usually do claim that they have had an effect (usually positive) on those who have participated, at the very least.

In the early days, workshop organizers, facilitators and observers tended to get away with personal observations of what went on as the workshop progressed, how participants' behaviour and statements changed during the week or so of the workshop, and what kinds of relationships developed between and within groups of adversaries. More recently, however, efforts have been made to evaluate the impact of workshops more systematically and to provide some data to answer the question: What did the workshop achieve? This has to be done with care and tact, however, as people in protracted, intense conflicts usually object, quite rightly, to 'being experimented on' or 'being the subject of some academic game'.

Still, the question remains of how can one tell the effect the workshop has had on those participating (the facilitating panel as well as the participants); and how one can assess the impact of a workshop with any degree of accuracy.

Exercise Scenario

YOU are members of the small team of observers and support staff that has been assisting a team of facilitators conduct a five-day workshop (the first, it is hoped, of a series) on a protracted civil strife in the African country of Zandia. It has been an interesting if somewhat noisy week, towards the end of which the participants seemed to be listening more carefully to what their adversaries said, and to be making the occasional constructive suggestion about some confidence-building measures that might be tried in the interval before the next workshop, planned to involve top advisers to the two rival leaders.

At the very beginning of the week, the then leading facilitator asked participants if they would mind if, at the end of the workshop, the organizers administered some questionnaires to 'get your reactions to the workshop and its processes ... and to see how you felt about it, what you learned from it, etc. etc. The participants agreed and at this morning's session, the penultimate morning meeting, the lead facilitator reminded them again of this commitment to general acceptance (rather reluctant in a couple of individual cases).

Your panel of facilitators is a rather diverse one, including an anthropologist, a social psychologist and an expert on Organizational Development, who has had a great deal of experience with National Training Laboratories (NTL) approaches and is interested in group dynamics. The other two members are an experienced facilitator from the Institute for Informal Diplomacy, who has worked on many African conflicts in the past, and a political scientist interested in 'discourse analysis', who has made several references to 'the social construction of meaning' and linguistic 'codes' at work in the week-long dialogue. You are not too sure what this means.

There was a brief discussion of the form the questionnaire might take at the first planning meeting before the workshop started, and some obvious disagreements among the panel of facilitators about its focus, form and purpose, let alone the possible negative effects of '... forcing our guests to indulge in this task ...' as someone remarked at the time. However, there has been nothing since that first discussion.

Exercise Task

The facilitating panel has asked you, as part of the team of administrators and observers, to provide some alternative models for 'an evaluative questionnaire', and a draft of the kind of questionnaire that you favour, given the current state of the workshop and 'the sensitivities of the participants' none of whom are too familiar with western-style opinion gathering.

You will probably need to defend and justify your choice of evaluative instrument to one or two members of the panel.

Write a short memorandum to the panel, outlining the options, explaining your selection of a particular type of instrument for this exercise, and attaching a draft questionnaire.

Exercise 9.3: Evaluating the Outcome of the Workshop.

Background Discussion.

One of the most challenging questions faced by scholar-practitioners conducting CAPS exercises is: 'So what did it all accomplish?' -although this same query is often put more bluntly: 'Did this resolve, or help to resolve, the conflict?'

In the early days of the development of collaborative analytical problem-solving, tracing through the effects of a workshop, or a series of dialogues, was often carried out in a very *ad hoc* manner, with little effort to be systematic or rigorous. Contacts were maintained with participants, follow-up visits made to the various countries or communities involved in the conflict, and efforts made to discern changes of tone, aspiration or strategic direction in what leaders of parties in conflict said or did. Sometimes proposals not unlike those developed in a workshop were forthcoming. On other occasions, phrases or concepts, apparently from the workshops, found their way into the public dialogue surrounding the dispute. On yet other occasions, 'effects' took the form of requests for further meetings or workshops, sometimes with an expanded membership.

However, as the use of informal problem-solving exercises, facilitated dialogues, open ended discussions, etc. grows and develops, one of the essential tasks, forming part of the overall design for the exercise, is to put in place some means of tracking the impact of the exercise on the conflict itself, quite apart from any effect it might have on the individual participants or the panel of facilitators. Sometimes the effects are easy to see, as when new organizations are established within the conflicting parties, led by or containing prominent members of the workshop. More often, given the confidential nature of an exercise, the effects are less obvious, involving changes of rhetoric -which may themselves be fleeting, as subsequent events combine to alter or negate any effects the workshop might have - or the floating of some official 'trial balloon' by one party to see whether the other is as serious about starting some formal dialogue such as might have been suggested at the workshop.

Whatever the anticipated or hoped-for effects, those organizing the exercise must be prepared to follow-up the meetings with the best possible procedure for tracing through the effects of the meetings and for identifying the factors that either help the workshop 'output' have a major impact (for example, what helps to ease the 're-entry' problem for participants); or place major obstacles in the way of the exercise having any effect at all. A tentative process for evaluating the outcome of the exercise needs to be planned, preferably well in advance of the workshop, and checked out with the participants for their approval and subsequent help. Only if this is done, and effects traced through and - if possible - documented, can claims about 'success' be made with any confidence.

Exercise Scenario

YOU have been asked to undertake the role of 'exercise historian' for the first of what the organizers hope will be a series of meetings on the continuing conflict in Etruria, although it is clear that some participants have, over the last few days, been worried about their presence at the discussions, given the provisions of the Alva Accord, and that this concern may prevent a repetition of such a CAPS exercise.

Apart from the occasional acrimonious outburst, threat to walk out and the efforts of a constitutional lawyer to read to everyone long extracts from a wide variety of European constitutions, the exercise seems to have gone reasonably well. Some participants have seemed to listen more closely to 'the other side', and there have been fewer set speeches 'for the record' as the week progressed. The last two days have been devoted to a discussion, 'purely speculative, of course' in the words of one prominent government supporter, of possible 'exits' from the current situation of irregular violence, stalemate, isolation and lack of communication between the adversaries (although participants representing the views of progovernment parties have resolutely turned down the idea that any deal might be struck with the guerilla group, POME, even in the longer term).

Most recently, participants have been discussing possible 'confidence-building measures', and have even allowed a list of these, based upon the suggestions originally recorded on newsprint, to be typed up by workshop support staff. At the end of the meeting, however, these lists, having been scrutinized and discussed, were ostentatiously left lying on the conference table, following a reminder by one participant that 'There is no point in taking such a document away from a wholly unofficial meeting!'

However, at the very last session of the workshop, participants have expressed the general feeling that the CAPS exercise had been 'useful', and that they had learned some new things from the dialogue. Moreover, they agreed to pass on the new insights they had gained over the last week, although 'We cannot guarantee that any significant changes can take place', as one participant remarked; and to suggest that another workshop might be convened to discuss the issue of 'exits' - or 'As you scholars say, "processes for moving towards a resolution of the conflict"...' in two or three months. One of the facilitators has commented that it seems likely that this will depend upon this workshop having some effects during the interim period, which, he suspects, will be somewhat longer than the three months everyone is talking about.

Exercise Task

During the planning period preceding the CAPS workshop, it was vaguely mentioned that part of the task of the exercise historians' team would be to put forward some ideas for a follow-up and evaluation process once the workshop was over. You have not paid much attention to this suggestion.

However, at the all-day debriefing session after the formal ending of the workshop, a clear expectation emerged that the historians would shortly produce some ideas for evaluating the effects of the workshop on the Etrurian conflict, both in the immediate aftermath of the exercise and in the longer term. It has been casually remarked that 'the funders' are looking for some evidence that the workshop has been a 'success' before deciding whether or not to renew support for the whole CAPS series on Etruria.

During the debriefing, various suggestions have been put forward, involving the need to arrange follow-up visits and interviews (when, how often, asking about what? you have said to yourself); the requirement for 'close monitoring of the situation in Etruria' (by whom, looking for what?); and, even, the development of 'indicators of change' that might help to identify 'impacts on various dimensions - political, military, social' (this last from an economist sitting on the panel of facilitators). All of these suggestions have been vague in the extreme.

What was not vague was a request from the three core facilitators that you should draft out some 'detailed ideas' for a follow-up procedure to 'evaluate the overall impact of the workshop' in Etruria, and present a scheme at the follow-up meeting of the CAPS team, due to be held in seven days' time. 'Nothing too elaborate, we don't have the money,' explains one of the core facilitators, 'but I'm sure you can come up with something fairly rigorous and academically respectable. Let me know if I can help.'

Produce a draft evaluation scheme.

APPENDIX THREE

A Guide to the Republic of Zandia.

REPUBLIC OF ZANDIA.

Extracts from the *Area Handbook of Zandia*, published by the United States Department of State [Washington D.C. 2001].

1. Historical Background.

Zandia is an independent republic situated on the west coast of Africa on the Bight of Benin. The Republic achieved its independence in 1965 following a period of trusteeship under the United Nations. Between 1923 and 1942 it was an Italian colony and after the end of the Second World War it again fell under Italian administration, this time under the supervision of the U.N. Trusteeship Council. Italy relinquished its trust on January 1st 1965, following elections for the Presidency and for the National Assembly. This body replaced the appointed Legislative Council which had assisted the Italian High Commissioner in governing the country since 1961...

2. Social and Demographic Features.

...Roughly speaking, the population of the country [approximately 7.5 million, although no official census have ever been carried out] can be divided into three ethno-linguistic groups. The smallest of these are the *mestizos*, people of mixed parentage, who live in the main towns and in the coastal areas of the country and who form the commercial elite, running the small businesses and much of the export trade which provides the country with some but not all of its foreign exchange earnings. This group makes up roughly 5% of the population and uses Italian as its major language.

The largest group in the country are the Wabanda, who speak a Bantu language and are closely related to the Ibo peoples of Nigeria. This group, which makes up approximately 65% of the total population, tends to live in the west and south of the country and to engage in subsistence agriculture, although they also supply the workforce for the iron ore and diamond extractive industries, as well as the increasingly important logging industry. The Banda have also traditionally supplied most of the military forces of the country, and are politically dominant, particularly since the late President Otono [the country's third President] converted the country into a one party state in 1976. [See below the section on "Politics"] The Banda community have traditionally been animist in their religious practices, but during the years of Italian rule many of them, especially among the educated elite, converted to Roman Catholicism and it is estimated that between 12 and 15% of the community are members of the Catholic Church.

In the north and east of the country the third important group, the Azanians, present both a people and a culture in marked contrast to the "down country" Wabanda. Partly this is the result of the marked change in terrain and climate as one proceeds "up country"

from the coastal regions, where the country becomes drier, the rainfall less and the country passes from grassland suitable for cattle grazing to the semi desert, Sahel-like landscape of the frontier regions of the extreme north. Traditionally the Azanians have mainly practised a nomadic, pastoralist life style, their main source of support being cattle on the grasslands, recently under considerable pressure from over-grazing, periodic drought and the effects of the open warfare that has been raging in the region for the last eight to ten years, [see below]; and camel herding further north and across the border into the neighbouring Democratic Republic of Samaale.

[Note; It was only in 1998 that the border between Zandia and Samaale was finally agreed between the two governments – much to the fury of some nationalist leaders in Samaale who persist in calling the frontier region of north “South Samaale. The border has yet to be demarcated although a Joint Border Demarcation Commission has been appointed but has been unable to begin its task owing to the continuing security situation in the region.]

As a people, the Azanians tend to be physically distinguishable from the down country Banda. Inter-marriage between the two groups is rare, given the widespread Azanian adherence to Islam and the relative isolation of the two groups from one another. The Azanians speak a very different language – a derivation of Hausa - from the Banda and have resisted efforts by the dominant group to make Banda the official language of the state. [During the period following independence, both political and commercial transactions tended to be carried out in Italian, but since the 1978 boycott of the government and the National Assembly by Azanian political leaders – and the imprisonment and exile of many of this elite – government business has been carried out in both Banda and Italian.]

Even at the elite level there has been little contact between the two communities. Members of the WaBanda elite tend to have been educated initially in local Catholic schools and have undertaken university level studies in Italian colleges and universities, especially Bologna. The much smaller Azanian elite traditionally tends to have undertaken tertiary education in Cairo, in Jordan and [a few] in England, although during the 1980's some younger members of elite Azanian families spent some time in Moscow and others in Havana.

3. Internal Politics Since Independence.

“...The “model” parliamentary democracy left in place by the departing Italian colonial administration in the mid-1960's rapidly deteriorated into considerable political instability during the 1970s and 1980s.

Originally, the Italians had put in place a multi-party, electoral system with a figurehead president and power in the hands of a chief minister selected from the National Assembly. By 1972 most of the smaller parties had been dissolved, their members joining the Zandian Youth League which in 1974 changed its name to the Zandian National Alliance [ZNA]. By that time Zandian politics had become virtually a

one party system [the ZNA] with a few maverick individuals representing the peoples of the north east region in the National Assembly [at least until 1978] and power centralised in Zambasi, the capital. Corruption seemed rife and in 1979 occurred the first of the three military coups which have afflicted the country, to be followed by a second in 1984 when a group of mainly WaBanda officers, led by feared “strong man” Major Thado Andreoni, replaced the elderly group of generals that had seized power in 1979.

Announcing his rule as that of the “National Redemption and Unity Regime”, General Andreoni [his promotion was rapid] proceeded to re-equip and increase the size of the Zandian army. These changes were carried out under the *rationale* of modernisation and against “the threat from the north” – by which everyone understood him to mean the Democratic Republic of Samaale. [The situation in that part of the country is discussed below.] He also abandoned even the pretence of consulting civilian leaders and many of the admittedly very small Zandian elite [intellectuals, journalists, academics, former politicians and even church leaders] found themselves in prison for criticising the policies and person of the “General Mzee” and his army colleagues.

... General Andreoni finally overstepped his power and control by attempting to have his son acknowledged as “Deputy President” with the intention of having the latter take over the country and the army after his death. Other army leaders reacted with a third coup in 1995, during which both Andreonis and several other members of their clique were gunned down in the Presidential Palace in Zambasi. To nobody’s surprise, the junta of military officers that carried out the coup announced that they were merely forming an interim regime before handing back power to a civilian government. To everybody’s surprise, this is precisely what they did, two years later following somewhat chaotic but reasonably fair elections [according to observation teams sent by the UN and by the Carter Center]. However, it proved impossible to campaign or carry out voting in the north east of the country owing to the guerrilla struggle there and the activities of the ALF, which called for a boycott of the “rigged, illegitimate and fraudulent process...”

...As of the present writing [Fall 2001 CE] the current Zandian Government appears stable but fragile and the army leaders still have considerable influence over policies, particularly those to do with military spending and internal security. The President [a former economics professor from and later president of the National University] who was elected with 76% of the votes cast in those regions able to vote, seems reasonably popular. He has appointed a group of ministers from the variety of political parties represented in the single chamber National Assembly [which has amendment and veto powers on presidential legislation as well as the right to formulate and pass legislation of its own for presidential approval]. ..

...At present, aside from the country’s relative lack of experience with democratic and political processes, the main problems facing the President and the national government consist of the continuing and escalating guerrilla war in the northern regions of the country, the appalling state of the economy following three military regimes, and continuing uncertainty about the role of the large and powerful military in the new, 21st Century Zandia... The need to deal with what is virtually a civil war has become paramount...

4. The North and the Problem of Separatism.

..... Italian colonial administration had always treated the Islamicised north of the country as a separate region to be ruled separately from the rest of the country. For example, it had never permitted missionary activity in that region as it had in the south, the west and the coastal region.....It was only in the early 1960's that efforts were made to agree on the precise location of the international border in that region but this attempt ended on independence and negotiations were not seriously taken up again until the 1997-8 international negotiations, held under the auspices of a special commission from the Organisation of African Unity. For all practical purposes, an international border does not exist and pastoralists tend to cross and re-cross this notional international line with their animals in search of water and grazing but with scant regard for whether these valuable commodities are actually located in Zandia or the Republic of Samaale...

.... Immediately before independence in 1965, some younger and more educated members of the local elites began to organize themselves politically into a movement known as the Azania Popular Peoples Movement [APPM], and to press for the region to be joined to neighbouring Samaale rather than its remaining part of Zandia. A referendum – which some observers characterized as "highly suspect" was held throughout the territory and this revealed that 78% of those questioned favoured remaining part of Zandia. Shortly after independence many of the leading members of the APPM were arrested, while others left the country as speedily as possible....

....in spite of the effects of the droughts of 1974-5 and 1983 the region remained relatively calm, even though the local administrators and police chiefs were almost exclusively appointed by the President's Office from among 'down country' waBanda. Political protests arose after 1985 during the Presidency of General Thado Andreoni, mainly because of heavy-handed efforts to change the basic life styles of the Azanians living in the region and to implement a program of settlement and "villagisation", as well as the production of a "Development Plan" that included proposals to dam the major rivers in the region, and begin a program of irrigation and the settlement of landless "down country" Banda on the irrigated territory. Strenuous and popular resistance to these policies and proposals increasingly took the form of violence, while political leaders from the Azanian region boycotted the – admittedly fairly impotent – National Assembly. In 1989 President Andreoni responded by declaring the entire region an "emergency zone" and handing responsibility for "maintaining law, order and stability" to the army and the feared police General Service Units. Since then the situation has deteriorated into a major guerrilla war, with control of more and more of the region passing into the hands of those whom the government terms "rebels" but who regard themselves as "freedom fighters"...

...The origins of the Azania Liberation Front remain somewhat obscure, but it is generally believed that the movement originated among some of the students from the region who were attending university in Cairo and who were much influenced by some of the basic ideas of the Arab Baath Party, especially those concerning independence and the right of self-determination. What is clear is that since the early

1990's the ALF has led the struggle against the government with some success, replacing other "resistance" movements such as the Free Azania Movement [FAM] and Azania First....Although there are clearly divisions with the ALF based on family and lineage differences, these have yet to cause the kind of major splits that weakened FAM...

5. Economic Development and the Recent Financial Crisis.

...The Azanian economy had developed only a little beyond subsistence agriculture and nomadic pastoralism in the north when Italian colonial rule came to an end...plantations growing bananas and dates for export [mostly Italian owned until nationalised under the first military regime] existed near the coast around the capital but the country's main earnings of hard currency came from the export of iron ore from the ore fields near the Malagrian border [the West German company carrying out this activity used the navigable stretches of the Rio Roso to ship this commodity out of the country]; and the diamond deposits along the middle reaches of the Rio Negro...

...Under the Andreoni regime, the lumber for export industry grew quickly into a multi-million dollar business, although few benefits from this were derived generally for the Zandian economy; much of the profit from the Anglo-Zandian timber Company and Maderas de Zandia finished in London or Madrid, or in private bank accounts in Zurich or Basle... With the advent of the new civilian Government in Zambasi, the extensive private holdings of the Andreoni family and their supporters in these enterprises were nationalised and efforts are on-going to recover what are rumoured to be substantial sums of money deposited in Switzerland in the former President's name...

The recent increase in oil prices from the Middle East and elsewhere have hit Zandia very hard, as has been the case in most developing countries... Zandia for some time has been a member of the group of countries known as the Least Developed of the Less Developed – in other words, the very poor of the world. The Government has tried to deal with the current financial crisis by reducing military expenditure but this attempt has met with fierce opposition from the military and reductions have yet to take place...

....An IMF team is presently in Zandia advising on financial reforms and restructuring the country's economy..."

APPENDIX FOUR

Some Alternative Solutions.

ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS.

As we noted earlier, there are no completely “correct” solutions to the exercise tasks set out in the body of the book, just solutions that have a variety of strengths and weaknesses that make some, on balance, more likely to succeed than others. The important thing is to try to evaluate the likely impact of each particular move or set of moves on those you are trying to influence; to try to “empathise” (in Ralph White’s terms) with each set of decision makers or opinion leaders; and always to carry out a careful evaluation of each possible strategy both before implementation and after “the results are in.”

Below are some possible solutions to the two exercises in Chapter 2, “Extending an Olive Branch” and “Selecting ‘the’ Parties”. In the latter case, the suggestions are accompanied by an evaluation of each of three possible solutions offered to deal with the dilemma of maximising the chances of “success” in approaching diverse and divided adversaries

Exercise 5.2. Approaching the S.P.L.M. in the Southern Sudan.

CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE ON THE SOUTHERN PROBLEM MEMORANDUM

To: Committee Chairman.
From: The Sub-Group on Peacemaking Possibilities
Re: Proposed Initiative Towards SPLM
Date: 2 December 1989

In response to your request for suggestions about initiating moves towards a peacemaking process with the southern rebels, we sketch out two possible scenarios below, together with our evaluation of the relative advantages and disadvantages of each. We would ask you to note that neither is certain to bring about the desired effect, which, to some degree, will depend upon the decision-making processes within an increasingly divided rebel leadership. However, we feel that the first set of suggestions represents the *least* that the President could do to have some effect on Garang and the SPLM, while the second is the *most* that the Government can safely do, given the expectations of its supporters. We would be happy to discuss both sets of suggestions with you, should you wish to explore either in greater detail.

Alternative A

(1) In mid-December, the President, through the President of Uganda, conveys to the SPLM leadership that he will initiate a unilateral ceasefire for one month throughout the three southern provinces. All military operations will cease from 25 December, save those necessary for escorting convoys between major towns in the south. Our troops will not fire unless attacked. The President calls upon the SPLM to reciprocate in order to build an atmosphere in which technical talks about the extension of a bilateral ceasefire beyond the initial month can take place.

(2) On 25 December the President publicly announces the ceasefire.

(3) On 1 January 1990, the Ministry of justice announces that it is releasing 3 prominent SPLM supporters from prison but will continue to keep them under house arrest in Khartoum.

(4) On 1 January 1990, the Ministry of Education announces the award of a major research grant to the Department of Political Science at the University of Khartoum for a one-year, comparative study of federal and confederal systems of government and their relevance for post-colonial African societies. (It would be an advantage if the grant could be awarded to a team consisting of prominent Northern *and* Southern scholars.)

(5) On 5 January, the President broadcasts over Khartoum Radio a review of the working of the ceasefire, emphasizing its success, and calls upon the SPLM to initiate contacts to begin negotiating an extension as a preliminary to subsequent discussions of an agenda for substantive talks.

Alternative B

(1) On 25 December, the President broadcasts a speech over Radio Khartoum announcing a unilateral one-month ceasefire by Government forces in the south, beginning on 1 January 1990. He states that the ceasefire will be extendable to 1 months if it is reciprocated by the SPLM. He also announces that this is first of a series of confidence-building measures to be undertaken by the Government over the next three months in order to bring a lasting peace to the country.

(2) On 1 January, the ceasefire comes into effect. On the same day, the President issues a statement that, at the end of one month's successful ceasefire and the restoration of 'appropriate conditions' in the south, the Government will undertake comprehensive action to assist in removing ob- to the implementation of humanitarian relief work among the civilian population of the south.

(3) On 15 January, the Minister of Foreign Affairs announces that in March 1990, the President will approach the Chairman of the Organization of African Unity with a request that he undertakes an initiative to help bring peace to the Sudan.

(4) On 1 February, the President reviews the workings of the ceasefire and - given that military incidents have successfully been kept to an acceptable minimum - announces that, once conditions are 'appropriate' the Government will set up a Special Commission' to report on the workings of Shared law in the three southern provinces. It will consider sympathetically nominations for membership of this Commission put forward by 'southern interests and organizations'.

On balance, we would recommend that the Committee might seriously consider recommending the first option to the President (perhaps amended so that the initial move takes the form of a public broadcast, which would gain the Government considerable credit, particularly internationally, for making a move towards peace). The army command in the south is less likely to object to a one-month truce - indeed, it may welcome a breathing space - and the easing of the conditions for imprisonment of some of the SPLM leaders could be symbolically important at a relatively low cost. The same can be said of the academic study. None of the moves in the first initiative is irreversible and all have no effect on the essence of the Government's present negotiating position. All are low-cost and can be presented to Dr al Turabi and the NIF hardliners as non-committing moves, which could merely open a dialogue with the rebels.

On the other hand, the moves suggested in Initiative B run the danger of giving the impression that we are in a weakening position vis-a-vis the SPLM, and would undoubtedly face considerable opposition from the army and the NIF. Furthermore, they are likely to signal to SPLM leaders that we are willing to consider modification in our position over Sharia law in the south (although this is certainly not implied in the mere setting up of a Commission) and that we are willing to treat with them as equals. Both impressions have to be avoided in any olive branch we offer.

RELATIVE ADVANTAGES/DISADVANTAGES OF SUGGESTED OPTIONS

	PROS	CONS
Option 1		
(1)	Initial contacts re ceasefire are confidential, so there is no public commitment should SPLM try to take propaganda advantage.	SPLM could try to leak details of initiative and claim our approach arises through weakness.
(2)	Ceasefire not conditional but does test willingness of SPLM to respond.	SPLM could simply use first month to re-group, reorganize and prepare.
(3)	Rapid implementation of ceasefire gives SPLM little chance to leak or distort nature of our initiative.	Possible problems of ensuring that all our military units in south understand and can implement ceasefire.

	PROS	CONS.
Option 2	<p>The initiative will place the onus on the SPLM to demonstrate its willingness to be reasonable in the search for peace.</p> <p>Involvement of the OAU will shift responsibility for any failure away from the President.</p> <p>The February review process will provide an "opt out" point which can easily be used to end the process.</p>	<p>Once made the ceasefire offer cannot be withdrawn whatever the SPLM response</p> <p>There will be a danger of losing control of the process once the Chairman is involved.</p> <p>The initial willingness to discuss "sharia" gives away a major bargaining point with nothing in return.</p>

Recommendation: We strongly recommend that the President tries the first option or some variant thereof for the reasons that we have outlined above.

Exercise 5.4. Selecting the Parties.

I. Three Alternative Suggestions.

Solution 1. Draft Recommendations of an Advisory Sub Committee to the World Council of Churches Committee on Africa.

A. Advisory Sub-Committee Tasks

We were asked to consider two questions. The first was whether circumstances are appropriate for a World Council of Churches attempt to organize, and then convene a peace conference in the Sudan given the current situation in that country and given the Christian Churches' previous relation- with the southern region of the country. If our answer to the first question is in the affirmative, the second question is who within Sudan should we attempt to involve in this process, so that any peace we might help to achieve will be a lasting one?

B. Background Assumptions

We start with what seems to us an obviously practical rule of thumb: we have to work with those organizations that exist and (an justifiably claim to represent some community, or category of people, involved in 'the conflict'.

We acknowledge that accepting this principle underplays the practical difficulties of discovering the truth of constantly heard accusations about certain Sudanese organizations that take the form 'X represents nobody but himself Clearly we need to know - and should try to find out - far more some of 'the parties' involved in the civil war than we do at present, but, at least at the start of the WCC initiative, we recommend assuming that if an organization exists and takes a position on the issues in conflict, then we should assume that it is a 'player in the game' until proven otherwise.

(Two of our members argued strongly that, at least in the longer term, we ought to be working to develop institutions that can speak for communities, ethnic groups or interests who are currently NOT represented in the conflict. In other circumstances, there seems much to be said for this argument about 'unrepresented voices'. However, we are currently attempting to deal with a costly and destructive civil war, which takes

lives and ruins others every day it is allowed to continue. In such conditions, the involvement of others, including ethnic groups and their traditional leaders must, surely, wait until the fighting has died down.)

One of our members notes the risks that the WCC might run of legitimizing some parties by contacting them formally, and delegitimizing others by not contacting them at all. However, we have taken this as a recommendation to proceed with caution and, initially, through informal channels.

Secondly, we felt that it was vital to include in any peacemaking process all those who have the capacity to undermine, derail or delay that process, no matter how opposed to peace they currently appear to us, as outsiders. This assumption implies that the WCC cannot simply try to set up a peace process or convene a peace conference by involving those who have shown previously that they can, and in some cases do, work with the Government in Khartoum; or those members of the Khartoum Government who are 'reasonable' on the Southern Question.

This assumption emphasizes the need to bring in those whose commitment to their goals have led them to violent resistance and who are portrayed as 'hawks' or 'hardliners'. If these people are not brought into the process at some stage, then they will use their best efforts to undermine any peace process in its later stages. The need to involve 'intransigents' seems particularly acute with the southerners, but even the strong political position currently enjoyed by President Nimiery in the north should not prevent us at least entertaining the idea that a settlement needs to be endorsed by all important political factions in Khartoum.

Lastly, it seemed to us practical to try to deal with one major conflict at a time. Several of our members have suggested that the WCC might involve itself in the conflicts developing in Kordofan and in Darfur and that peace in one part of the country is intimately bound up with overall peace in the Sudan. We agree with this viewpoint in principle, and with the idea that the conflicts in the country -and some that are occurring elsewhere in the region - are closely 'interlocked'.

However, the WCC has limited means and should not try to set itself up as a general peace-bringer, save in the spiritual sense. While it is true that the conflicts are connected, it is important to make a start with one 'core' conflict in the hope that success there might lead to successful peace making processes in others. Our problem, therefore, is where to start first? Given the pervasive and countrywide effects of the struggle in the south, this does seem the appropriate place to start.

C. Recommendations

With these assumptions in mind, we recommend that the WCC consider initiating a peacemaking effort between the Sudanese Government in Khartoum and the various political and politico-military organizations operating in the three southern provinces. The eventual aim of the initiative will be the holding of a peace conference in a neighbouring capital city, under the auspices of the WCC or the All Africa Council of Churches, possibly with the assistance of a major African leader to give legitimacy to the proceedings.

As an initial step, the WCC should send an informal and confidential fact-finding delegation to Khartoum, to consult with President Nimiery about the possibilities of a negotiated settlement to the conflict and his willingness to countenance: 1 (a) an official WCC approach to the southern parties and (b) an eventual meeting with their leaders to discuss arrangements for a peaceful future for the country. The delegation should explore the implications of recent Presidential statements and whether the President has any pre-conditions for attending a possible peace conference, given that careful preparations will to be made for such an event.

Given a positive response from the President, the WCC should announce its plans to despatch a public, fact-finding mission to Uganda, Kinshasa and the southern Sudan to explore three issues with the leaders of the southern parties: their willingness to hold preparatory talks among themselves regarding a possible negotiated settlement with Khartoum; their possible, subsequent willingness to prepare for and attend a 'round table' peace conference with members of President Nimiery's new government; and the possibilities for outside development assistance for the re-construction of the south, once fighting has ceased. The mission should be open to approach by all existing southern organizations, both political and military.

Should there be a willingness on the part of 'key' southern leaders to meet among themselves to discuss a joint negotiating stance, the question arises as to whether the WCC should be involved in such a meeting in some way. Our recommendation is that this part of the process should - if possible - be conducted by the southerners themselves. If WCC becomes too closely involved in a process which might be construed in the north as an effort to build southern unity, preparatory to greater military efforts, the effects on WCC credibility in Khartoum will hardly be beneficial. If it seems likely that the southern organizations need assistance in convening or facilitating such a meeting, other relevant organizations might be encouraged to undertake such a role, the WCC reserving itself for the later peace conference, or national level round table.

Again, we should emphasize that the objectives of this second, 'southern' stage of the process should include an effort to discover which of the southern organizations are serious parties, representing significant

interests and groupings in the south. The WCC should not be in the business of choosing who is a party to this conflict and who is not. The southerners themselves should know this and should develop a process that includes the major players.

We submit the above recommendations for the Committee's consideration and would be happy to discuss further details with members of the Committee either individually or while in session.

Signed:

..... Co-Chair

..... Co-Chair

Solution 2. Sub-Committee on a Sudanese Initiative; 31 August 1971

To: Africa Committee, World Council of Churches

From: Chair, Sub-Committee on the Sudan

Date: 30 August 1971

Re: Proposed WCC Peacemaking Initiative

We have discussed the questions that you asked us to consider regarding a possible WCC initiative to convene a peace conference on the issue of 'Peace in the Sudan', to which representatives of the Khartoum Government and leaders of the southern 'parties' could be invited.

In the view of Sub-Committee members, such an initiative would probably be premature, given the current state of disarray within the southern leaders and their organizations. I have given our brief review of the recent history of the conflict in the south of Sudan reveals a long-standing inability of various southern factions and ethnically based organizations to co- with one another, and the tendency of any political coalitions to be short-lived. In the present situation, there appear to be two rival 'governments' in the south, at least three militias, and an indeterminate number of political organizations, some apparently grouped around single, influential leaders.

It is our contention that any effort to bring such a disparate and divided group of 'parties' to a negotiating table with the Khartoum Government would merely convince the latter of the incapacity of the southerners to agree on a set of goals, to conclude any lasting agreement or to make one 'stick'.

However, we would recommend that the Committee on Africa might consider the possibility of establishing a forum for the *southern parties*, in which their leaders or representatives could discuss the issues that divide them, and the requirements for constructing an agreed 'platform' from which negotiations with the new regime in Khartoum might, at some future date, be opened. Until the southerners manage to establish a minimum of unity among themselves, there seems to be little chance of the negotiated settlement apparently sought by General Nimeiry, but a significant chance that premature attempts at negotiation will either end in frustration in Khartoum or a revival of the idea that a military solution is the best way of achieving a peaceful south - or both.

Specifically, we recommend that:

(1) The WCC sends a fact-finding mission to Uganda and the south of the country to determine:

- (a) Who are the key leaders of the main southern parties, and how might they be best approached with the idea of a southern 'forum'?
- (b) What support do the various parties and factions enjoy, and is this based upon ethnic, religious or other factors?
- (c) What is the relationship between the political parties and the guerrilla organizations fighting in the bush?
- (d) What appear to be the main issues separating the various southern parties, and might there be a basis for constructing an agreed, initial negotiating position to be presented to Khartoum as a basis for formal negotiation?

(2) Subject to the information revealed by such a commission, the WCC proposes to convene a forum, or 'round table', in Kampala or Nairobi, at which differences between southern organizations could be discussed and, if possible, a common negotiating platform agreed.

- (3) Simultaneously, an informal mission be sent to Khartoum:
- (a) to discuss the possibility of a negotiated settlement with General Nimiery;
 - (b) to explain the purpose of the WCC's mission to the south;
 - (c) to explore the possibility of southern notables now working in Khartoum attending a forum in Kampala; and
 - (d) to establish whether the WCC might be able to play any role in a subsequent meeting between representatives of the Khartoum Government and southern leaders.

If these recommendations seem too ambitious, at the very least the WCC should send a fact-finding mission to Khartoum to explore the new government's views about the possibility and desirability of a negotiated settlement.

.....
Chair, Sudan Sub-Committee

Solution 3. Sub-Committee on the Sudan: Recommendations

The members of your Sub-Committee have carefully considered the outline proposal for a mission to explore the possibilities of the WCC mediating a peace conference on the civil war currently continuing in the Sudan.

While recognizing that there are clear signs that General Nimiery's new government in Khartoum might be willing to proceed towards a negotiated settlement if a way could be found of doing so without loss of 'face', we feel it would be premature for the WCC to undertake such a mission.

Your Sub-Committee felt that we simply lack the detailed and accurate information that would enable the WCC to embark on such a delicate process with any hope of success.

It certainly seems to be the case that, in contrast to the position of the government in Khartoum, the southern move- is characterized by diverse groups and factions, divided from one another by differences and antagonisms that may be based on ethnic and religious factors, personal rivalries, leadership struggles or issues of principle. However, we currently lack an accurate picture of what are the key issues in the south, who are key leaders and which are the key parties.

We would therefore recommend that, as a first step, the WCC sends a private, unofficial fact-finding mission to the south of the Sudan with the task of producing an accurate picture of the political and military situation there. The issue of a further WCC initiative can then be discussed in the light of the mission's Report.

The mission should be required to provide information on, at least, the following questions:

- (1) Which are the key political and politico-military organizations from the southern Sudan?
- (2) What level of support does each enjoy and what is the source of this support?
- (3) Who are key leaders in each group?
- (4) What relations, if any, do each of these organizations bear to southern individuals and organizations currently working in the north with the Khartoum Government?
- (5) To what extent do political and ethnic divisions in the south coincide?
- (6) To what degree do key southern parties co-operate or conflict with one another?
- (7) What are the attitudes within the various southern parties to the idea of a negotiated settlement, or even of exploring a peace process?
- (8) Which parties possess important outside patrons that would have to be brought into any peace process?
- (9) Are there any currently unrepresented groups or communities who would be stakeholders in any peace agreement?
- (10) Are there currently any groups or factions totally opposed to talks with Khartoum, and what is the basis for their rejection of discussions?

II. EVALUATIONS.

Comments on Three Alternative Proposals for WCC Mission to Sudan

All three drafts have obviously taken considerable care over the problem of how to involve all the relevant parties in the proposed peace initiative and have considered some of the implications of what appear to be significant divisions within the 'southerners'. All show a recognition that the WCC faces a situation of great uncertainty and the suggestions they make differ according to:

(1) the importance of first reducing the level of uncertainty before taking any initiative, rather than proceeding rapidly on the basis of present, admittedly inadequate, knowledge, and thus taking advantage of an apparent northern willingness to contemplate a negotiated settlement;

(2) the level of risk they view as acceptable in the light of potential benefits arising from a successful peace initiative; this ranges from high risk of failure and related costs to the parties and WCC together with high potential benefits to more cautious, incremental and low risk suggestions; and

(3) the implied degree of flexibility likely to be demanded of the mission they suggest (i.e. the extent to which they leave open possible WCC tactics for dealing with likely reactions from both Khartoum and the southerners).

The main problems seem to be how to find out and recognize 'relevant' parties, and what criteria are to be applied to determine which are/are not relevant to a peacemaking initiative; in what order to approach the various tasks associated with initiating a peace process; and whether the WCC should be the organization to undertake all of the relevant tasks, but particularly those involved in reconciling divisions among southerners as well as bringing northern and southern parties together to negotiate an end to the civil war.

Solution 1

Strengths include a willingness to explain the background assumptions underlying recommendations, acceptance of the principles that no one organization can do everything, and that there is a need to define what are 'essentials' (and why) and then concentrate on dealing with these, rather than taking up other problems and dissipating effort.

There is a perennial problem in many conflicts of losing some credibility with one side by going first to the other, and always a need to have a convincing explanation as to why one went first to the enemy. In this case, a WCC visit to Khartoum first may run the risk of losing WCC credibility with the southerners. Also, there needs to be some contingency planning for WCC's next steps if President Nimeiry's reaction is lukewarm, or if he expresses strong antipathy toward a WCC visit to 'the south'.

Plans for the second stage do deal with the potential difficulty of involving the WCC directly in a procedure for 'empowering' the southerners (this is almost inevitably what it will look like to Khartoum). However, the questions of who will convene and organize such a process, and which person or organization will take up the role of southern 'unifier' are left 'up in the air' so some ideas are needed about who to encourage in this task. Similarly, the WCC might need to think about how to line up donors before making promises about development assistance. There is a lot left to chance and hope in the proposal as presently outlined.

The principle that outsiders should not select 'the serious' parties is a good one but is it realistic to believe that the Southern parties will be able to agree themselves on inclusion or exclusion? Moreover, what happens if the southerners, with little without outside help, are unable to 'get their act together' and form a united front? Is the prospect of getting to negotiate with Khartoum sufficient reward to make them abandon their obvious differences? Some thought needs to be given to WCC contingencies if the southerners remain disunited, as opposed to emerging willing to talk with Khartoum as a united coalition.

In general, the WCC might need to think a bit more about what it does if things begin to go wrong - and, indeed, what will be clear signs that things are going wrong.

Solution 2.

The major risk with this proposal, of course, is that of being seen as a partial intervener, whose impact, even if not whose main aim, is to unify and strengthen rebellious southerners, so that they can conduct a more effective political and military campaign against the 'legitimate, national government' in Khartoum. More thought probably needs to be given to how the WCC might reassure Khartoum - and, indeed, whether this can be done to a level whereby the WCC remains a potential interlocutor between Khartoum and a south they have helped to unify. If the prospect seems unlikely, then some thought might be given to who can carry on a peace process between Khartoum and the unified south, if the WCC cannot - and what relationship the WCC's regional peacemaking process should have to any national-level process.

That said, the proposal is good on the problems posed by a divided south, and the need for unity and order to enable negotiations to begin with the north. The problem is whether the idea of 'unity for negotiation' can be differentiated in principle from 'unity for more effective coercion', and even if it can in principle, can it in the minds of both the southern and northern leaders?

Lastly, this scheme also seems to call for some contingency plans and some criteria. For example, what, broadly speaking, are the criteria for determining whether to go forward with the southern 'forum' or not? For example, suppose some southern leaders indicate that they would be unwilling to attend such a forum, or

attach stringently unacceptable conditions to their attendance? ('I am not going to come if that traitor X is there!') What contingencies need to be considered in the face of such possible outcomes - and what in the case of a complete failure to get the southerners together and/or keep them together if they do reach any agreement among themselves, particularly given that the WCC will probably have already lost most of its credibility in Khartoum?

Solution 3.

Obviously, this is the most cautious of the three proposals, and the one that involves the lowest risk, both to the parties and the WCC. (Decision-making groups often tend to go for low risk, incremental options, so it may be necessary to subject this option to the question; 'Can't we do a bit more than this?')

On the other hand, this suggestion does take sensible account of the uncertainties about the situation in Sudan mainly the south - and the need to try to clarify the details of who is who, and what is going on. (Does this demand a WCC fact-finding mission to the south? Are there no other reliable sources of data that avoid the problems of such a trip?) It asks good questions and is a model for the kind of questions all the proposals should seek to answer, by one means or another.

There might be a problem of sending even a fact-finding mission to the south without first clearing it with Khartoum, so there would then be a need to explain to Khartoum what the longer-range intentions of the WCC might be. Hence there is some need to think a bit ahead in terms of contingency planning on the basis of what different pictures - and recommendations - the mission *might* bring back from its investigations.

Overall, this suggestion really needs some extending into the future, and several 'What then?' questions could sensibly be posed about *subsequent* WCC actions. It is quite possible to undertake sensible speculations about a number of alternative scenarios involving WCC activities - up to and including a full-WCC mediation initiative - so that some anticipatory ideas might be appropriate even given the current levels of uncertainty and lack of knowledge.

III. SUMMARY.

Overall, the three proposals confront many of the main problems likely to be faced in considering the launching of some form of peacemaking initiative into a conflict system characterized by divided and even structurally incoherent adversaries; and they bring up some interesting and sensible ways of dealing with such difficulties. There are no easy answers.

The major weaknesses exhibited to some degree by all the proposals involve, firstly, a certain unwillingness to ask questions about the likely perceptions held by the parties themselves of the WCC, its past relations with the Sudan, especially given the religious issues and overtones involved in the conflict and the historical role of missionaries in the south under colonialism, and the likelihood that it will be perceived as an ally - or a partial patron - rather than an unbiased intermediary seeking to make peace. Secondly, while all proposals implicitly or explicitly acknowledge that the WCC cannot 'do everything' in a peace mission, none really takes up the question of which other entities might be involved in a peace process, and how they might best be involved. Some ideas on this might be useful. Lastly, the proposals suffer from an unwillingness to try to answer the question: 'What do we do if this does not work, or things go wrong?' The proposals concentrate on 'the next steps' if things work out 'as we hope they will'. This sort of thinking is necessary, but some thought has to be given to contingency planning for things going wrong (they will!) and for rescuing the initiative, the parties and the W C C.

APPENDICES

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Appendix Two

A BRIEF GUIDE TO THE WORK OF SOME PIONEERING SCHOLAR-PRACTITIONERS.

Introduction

Over the last twenty-five years, a number of academics have written theoretically about the use of a variety of related problemsolving approaches, but have based their theoretical and conceptual writings on their own direct, practical experience of conducting workshops, facilitated discussions and other forms of problem-solving exercises. They have thus closely approached the ideals first put forward in the 1940s by Kurt Lewin of being 'practical theorists', and in the 1960s by John Burton of testing out theories in the real world of protracted and deep-rooted conflicts.

Many of the scholars mentioned in the Bibliography below have worked together on particular problem-solving exercises, and it is clearly the case that:

- (1) their work as facilitators owes much to the ideas and practical experience of other members of this informal network; and
- (2) their theoretical writings borrow from one another's work to varying degrees.

In one sense, these scholars constitute a 'first generation' of theorist practitioners, or practical theorists. It is clearly the case that second and even third generations of such practising theorists now exist, and that there has been a fruitful cross-fertilization of ideas and practices among individuals and institutions that have focused their work on a number of different 'conflict arenas', from the individual to the international. The field has grown enormously over the last ten years, as has its literature. However, the number of scholars thinking and acting as consultants in international or inter-communal arenas remains fairly small, so that our Bibliography will hopefully cover many of the theories and practices currently available for helping to resolve deeprooted and protracted conflicts at this most complex level.

We have attached brief notes on each person and a list of works relevant to their activities as consultants and facilitators, in the hope that this information will be of interest and help to the next generations of problem solvers and facilitators now facing the world of protracted and intractable conflicts.

Azar, Edward E.

Ed Azar was a Lebanese scholar who studied first at Stanford and whose earliest work involved efforts to use events data to provide 'early warning' of conflicts and to trace through sequences of conflicting and peaceful interactions between nation states.

He developed the Conflict and Peace Data Bank (COPDAB), which later scholars developed as GEDS, but later switched his interest to the nature of third-world development and its relationship to protracted conflict and its resolution. In the 1980s, he and John Burton collaborated briefly on theory development and on problem-solving exercises dealing with the Lebanese conflict and the British-Argentine dispute over the Falkland/Malvinas Islands. Azar died tragically young in 1991.

Publications

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Burton, John W.

John Burton started his career as a diplomat towards the end of the Second World War. As a member of the Australian delegation, he attended the San Francisco Conference that set up the United Nations. He later became head of the Australian diplomatic service. In England in the 1960s, he drew upon ideas from social case work, industrial relations and the 'human relations' approach used by the Tavistock Institute to pioneer the use of 'problemsolving workshops' (initially called 'controlled communication') to help resolve complex and violent conflicts. Among the panellists in some of Burton's early exercises were Roger Fisher, Herb Kelman, and Chadwick Alger. Burton's list of publications is huge; what follows is a selection of those dealing mainly with problem solving in its practical aspect.

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Conflict and Communication: The Use of Controlled Communication in International Relations, 1969, Macmillan, London.

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Curie, Adam

Adam Curle comes from a background of both educational and development studies, and worked as a consultant at the Tavistock Institute in London. He joined the Society of Friends, and became active in Quaker peacemaking processes, working in the Middle East, in Biafra, in Northern Ireland and in Sri Lanka, among other places, where Quakers have tried to fulfil their peace mission by acting as go-betweens, private diplomats and reconcilers. Curle was the first

Professor of Peace Studies in England, at the University of Bradford, and continues his work as a third party consultant and facilitator.

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Doob, Leonard W.

Leonard Doob began his career as a young psychologist by contributing to Dollard's classic work on frustration-aggression, became interested in social conflict and joined those exploring the use of workshops in conflict resolution in the 1960s. His approach to process and procedure varied tremendously. Some cases consisted of highly structured meetings based upon NTL and T-Group models, while others seemed to lack structure at all. He worked on conflicts in the Horn of Africa, Cyprus and Northern Ireland. In this last case, Doob became the centre of a controversy over both the treatment of participants during one workshop and the issue of participants' vulnerability on their return to their own community, both issues which remain controversial in the field of conflict resolution.

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Resolving Conflict in Africa: The Fermeda Workshop, 1970, Yale University Press, New Haven, CT.

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Intervention: Guides and Perils, 1993, Yale University Press, New Haven, CT.

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Fisher, Roger

Roger Fisher must be the best known of the theorist-practitioners in this group. Coming from a background in international law, Fisher started writing practical handbooks for decision-makers in the early 1960s, going on to write the international bestseller *Getting to 'Yes'* with Bill Ury and thus starting off an avalanche of 'getting' books. He was a founder of the Harvard Negotiation Project in 1984, and (with Jim Laue) of the Conflict Clinic Inc. He has served as a consultant and facilitator in innumerable conflicts from the Middle East to South Africa and beyond. One day he will write up his vast case-work files, or some lucky doctoral students will be allowed access to them.

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Fisher, Ronald J.

From a younger generation than the theorist practitioners of the 1960s, Ron Fisher's background is in social psychology but he developed an interest in problem-solving approaches early and wrote two excellent survey articles of the practice in *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, while beginning to use workshop methods with participants from Canada. Later, he branched out and began to use a series of workshop approaches in Cyprus, at the same time attempting to investigate comparatively and scientifically the nature of the processes used in problem solving and the actual effects of participation on both participants and the conflict itself.

Publications

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Hare, A. Paul

Much of Paul Hare's work has been carried out from universities in South Africa and Israel using a wide variety of approaches to conflict resolution, often in conjunction with his London-based colleague, Herb Blumberg. Hare has worked in Cyprus, the Middle-East and in South Africa and his work is informed by an individual and unique approach to issues of conflict resolution.

Publications

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Kelman, Herbert C.

One of the original group of scholars involved in John Burton's work in London, Herbert Kelman has probably undertaken more problem-solving exercises and written more papers and articles on aspects of problem solving than any other scholar-practitioner. He originally applied his procedures to a variety of conflicts - Cyprus, India/Pakistan - but since the mid-1970s has concentrated his attention on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, both at the decisionmaking and opinion leader levels. A number of key figures in this dispute have worked with Kelman over the years, and his influence has been considerable.

Publications

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Laue, James H.

Jim Laue's interest in social conflict and its resolution dates back to the 1960s when he worked for the US Community Relations Commission and continued via the Conflict Clinic Inc and ICAR. He was an active practitioner in protracted social conflicts within the United States, and in recent years had begun to turn his attention to Northern Ireland and South Africa. Unfortunately, he always used to say that you could 'do' conflict resolution or you could talk or write about doing it. He did it, so his writings are sparse, but well worth tracking down.

Publications

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Quaker Conciliators

The Society of Friends has long been active in conciliation, reconciliation and, more recently, problem solving. Unfortunately, Quaker reticence and their commitment to quiet diplomacy works against much in the way of published accounts of their activities as go-betweens or mediators. The techniques of such intermediaries as Sydney Bailey, Landrum Bolling, Elmore Jackson and Walter Martin deserve to be better studied and understood for future generations.

Publications

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Rogers, Carl

Carl Rogers is probably best known for his leading role in the development of 'humanistic psychology' with its emphasis on a 'person-centred' approach to therapy and the importance of the therapist being capable of 'non-judgemental listening'. The influence of this last idea on the development of facilitative third-party practice needs no emphasis. In the 1960s Rogers was very influential in developing the use of 'encounter' groups, and in the 1980s in the promotion of cross-cultural communication.

During the last fifteen years of his life Rogers attempted to apply his person-centred approach to politics, using its methods with leaders, policy-makers and groups in conflict. He was particularly interested in the reduction of racial tensions and in the application of the approach to multicultural disputes, working with groups in South Africa and Northern Ireland, as well as in the United States, Brazil, France, Japan, Italy and the Philippines.

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Saunders, Hal H.

Hal Saunders was a diplomat who took part in many of the formal diplomatic interactions involving the Arab-Israeli conflict before deciding that information approaches also offered ways of dealing with such protracted conflicts. He was an early member of the exchanges between Americans and Soviets at the Dartmouth Conference, and strongly advocates such a gradualist approach in tackling deep-rooted conflicts. More recently he has written about the whole 'pre-negotiation' phase of conflict resolution, while acting as a facilitator in a large number of dialogues between adversaries in conflicts occurring in widely different arenas, from Latin America to the former Soviet Union.

Publications

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'International Relationships; It's Time to Go Beyond "We" and "They"', *Negotiation _Journal*, 1987, 3 (3) pp. 245-274.

'When Citizens Talk; Nonofficial Dialogue in Relations between Nations', in McDonald, J.W. and Bendahmane, D., *Conflict Resolution; Track Two Diplomacy*, 1987, Foreign Service Institute, US Department of State, Washington, DC.

(with Slim, R.) 'Dialogue to Change Conflictual Relationships', *Higher Education Exchange*, 1994, Kettering Foundation, Dayton, OH, pp. 43-56.

'Track Two'

In the 1980s a number of diplomats began to take seriously the idea of quiet, private diplomacy and problem solving as a useful adjunct to formal 'Track One' efforts at the official level. This was mainly due to the work of two members of the US Foreign Service Institute, John McDonald and Joseph Montville, who coined the term and proceeded to explore and explicate it, as well as beginning to put some of its ideas into practice themselves.

Publications

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Montville, J.V. (with Davidson, W.D.), 1981-2, 'Foreign Policy According to Freud', *Foreign Policy*, 45 pp. 145-157.

van de Merwe, Hendrik

Hendrik van der Merwe was the founder of the Center for InterGroup Studies at the University of Capetown, and a leading practitioner of 'quiet diplomacy' between the various parties to the protracted conflict in South Africa. He acted

as a go-between for the various parties over a long period of time when contact between the warring groups was otherwise reduced to coercion and violence; arranged contacts between South African business leaders and the ANC, and facilitated communication between ANC, PAC and Inkatha at a time when divisions among these organizations threatened the peace process.

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Wedge, Bryant

Bryant Wedge was a psychiatrist and public servant who worked both in and out of government to advance ideas which first came to him in the Dominican Republic in the 1960s where he found himself unexpectedly in the role of an intermediary between some of his Dominican student contacts and the US Embassy. He worked with Jim Laue and many others on the US Peace Academy campaign, was an early advocate of dialogue between the USA and the Soviet Union and founded the conflictresolution programme at George Mason University in 1981.

Publications

'Psychiatry and International Affairs', *Science, 21 July 1968, pp. 281-285.*

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'A Psychiatric Model for Intercession in Intergroup Conflict', *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 1971, 7 (6) pp. 762-763.*

'The Individual, the Group and War', in Winnick, H.Z., Moses B. and Ostrow, M., *The Psychological Bases of War, 1973, Quadrangle Books, New York.*

'Mediating Inter-Group Conflict in the Dominican Republic', in McDonald, J.W. and Bendahmane, D.B., *Conflict Resolution: Track Two Diplomacy, 1987, Foreign Service Institute, Washington, DC.*