

A CRITICAL EVALUATION OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION TECHNIQUES:
FROM PROBLEM-SOLVING WORKSHOPS TO THEORY

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"The study of conflict and conflict resolution in whatever setting may be the most significant and rewarding study of the decade".

Jandt, 1973 : 5.

"... To enter into war needeth no counsel, but how to end war with honour and profit men must needs study..."

Henry VIII

ABSTRACT

The object of this study is to present a comparative analysis of the system of problem-solving workshops and associated conflict resolution techniques exemplified in the work of John W Burton and Leonard Doob and their associates.

The approach has been to structure the research as a methodological critique of the Burton and Doob models, with special consideration given to their respective domain assumptions, internal logic, methodology, process and prescriptive dimensions.

Informed by the assumption of the universality of conflict, the study begins by examining the particular strengths and weaknesses associated with Burton and Doob's work. The approach is descriptive-analytical and sets out to isolate, identify and describe the salient features of the problem-solving approach followed by the two authors. Specific case studies used by them have been subjected to critical analysis. The basic notion of problem-solving and its relevance to conflict analysis and resolution is also explored in some detail.

In arriving at a conclusion, the study suggests that problem-solving workshops have specific strengths, notably in the area of conflict analysis as well as in influencing individual perceptions and competing value positions. Certain shortcomings in the theoretical and practical utility of this approach, however, could be overcome, in the author's opinion, by giving attention to the area of third party intervention, notably in assessing the variables affecting the process, such as the time sequence, the structure of the discussion format, and the application of specific techniques.

In the final analysis, it is agreed that these problem-solving workshops can serve as a useful analytical tool in contemplating the dynamic of conflict relationships and behaviour. Their theoretical and practical utility, but remain inherently limited unless they are integrated with a broader body of literature on bargaining and third party intervention.

The study concludes with the observation that despite an extensive and growing body of literature on conflict, the practice of third party intervention - especially within the workshop setting - has only recently been studied in depth. It is in this respect that this study hopes to be of some practical value - especially in the case of a deeply divided society such as South Africa.

*I declare that this dissertation is my own, unaided work.
It is being submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in the University of Cape Town. It has not been submitted
before for any degree or examination in any other University.*

Signed by candidate

Signature Removed

Andre du pisani

1st day of June, 1988.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to clarify the basic problem that underlies this research. In addition, to explain the mode of enquiry and approach to the subject matter. Finally, to locate the material presented here within the broader field of international relations scholarship.

1.1 Stating the problem

In recent years, researchers analysing conflict resolution processes have conducted and proposed various problem-solving workshops. These workshops attempt to apply concepts originally developed in social-psychological literature and analyses of small group dynamics and interaction and insights derived from industrial disputes, to the structure and dynamic of international conflict.

This study attempts a comparative analysis of some of the better known problem-solving workshops and associated conflict resolution techniques, developed by John W. Burton and Leonard Doob and their associates, and to suggest tentatively how one might progress from pre-theories to more empirically-based theories of conflict termination or resolution.

The research will be structured along a methodological critique of the above models of conflict resolution. Special emphasis will be placed upon their respective domain assumptions, internal logic, methodology, process, and prescriptive dimensions. Thus the basic approach is comparative and descriptive-analytical.

Exponents from both European and North American theoretical traditions have been selected for comparative analysis with a view

to highlight both the differences and similarity between these respective contributions. The emphasis will be on the actual techniques and procedures proposed to resolve conflict, rather than on the more general phases of the conflict process.

This study rests on the assumption of the universality of conflict. While conflict is seen to arise from the very nature of man himself by some scholars, others emphasise the relevance of environmental factors for an understanding of the origin and dynamic of conflict. Politics invariably involves the generation and resolution of conflict in one form or another. Thus, conflict is not necessarily destructive - it can perform constructive individual and social functions. Conflict is an important accelerator of social change and individual psychological development. The question is not how to avoid or suppress conflict; doing so can even have harmful or stagnating consequences. Rather, the challenge is how to create the conditions that encourage constructive problem-solving, in other words, how conflict can be used constructively.

The research associated with John W Burton and Leonard Doob and their respective colleagues has been selected for analysis on both theoretical and practical grounds. Theoretically, it lends itself to comparison at various levels. First, at the level of assumptions. Second, at the level of process dimensions and methodology, and finally, at a prescriptive level. While the work of Burton and Doob differs in the application of specific techniques for conflict resolution, they share some common domain assumptions about the nature of conflict and its termination. Moreover, both Burton and Doob have applied their respective

problem-solving workshops to communal conflicts, which although not similar, shared some common properties. In addition, Doob and his associates also applied their model in the African context.

A final theoretical consideration relates to the standing of these two scholars in this specific field of scholarship. References to the works of both Burton and Doob are to be found in most of the definitive textbooks on international conflict. [1] Moreover, these two scholars are widely regarded as the originators of the notion of "creative problem-solving", associated with the workshop approach.

From a practical point of view, two considerations have informed their selection. First, the fact that there is a considerable body of critical literature available on their work, and secondly, that both scholars have over the years, undergone a discernable progression in their basic thinking about conflict and its termination. This not only makes them interesting, but enhances their usefulness and appeal for comparative analysis. Burton, in particular has shifted his emphasis on 'perception' in the late 1960s and early 1970s to an emphasis on 'human needs'. Doob too, has moved away from an over concern with methodology and techniques to a wider and more humane approach to conflict resolution.

1.2 Locus within the discipline of international relations

In the analysis of interstate conflict, processes is central to much of international relations writing. Predominantly, the emphasis of prominent international relations scholars has been on the first two phases of the conflict process - the causes of conflict and the conflict behaviour of states and nations.

Relatively little attention has been directed toward models for the termination or resolution of conflict. This is somewhat surprising since, even if one leaves aside the normative questions regarding the desirability of achieving an absence of conflict, it is highly unlikely that such a state of affairs will ever be achieved.

Therefore, a strong case can be made for the scientific study of conflict, and especially for the processes by which conflicts can be managed and terminated.

Much of the literature on conflict resolution in general and the role of third party intervention in conflict processes in particular, to bring about such a resolution, has been from a historical or legalistic perspective, providing descriptions of particular conflicts, often overemphasising their unique attributes. Other more traditional methods of third-party intervention such as arbitration would for instance focus on the International Court of Justice, negotiation and arbitration by the League of Nations, and the use of "neutral" intermediaries to mediate dispute between conflicting parties. [2]

In the latter part of the 1960s, however, a new approach to an analysis of conflict processes and the resolution of conflict evolved: the problem-solving workshop. Burton, 1969:3 comments: "The development of this approach arose from a belief that more conventional methods and techniques of third-party intervention, based on legal intervention and diplomacy, were not particularly successful in resolving conflict". More specifically, it was argued that conventional techniques relied upon coercive and omnipotent methods, resulting in "solutions" based on compromise and often superimposed by some extraneous authority.

Traditional approaches treated conflicts as "contests to be won" - the new approach was to examine conflicts as "problems to be solved". To paraphrase Burton. Within this new approach a conscious effort was made to apply concepts and techniques developed in social-psychological literature and analyses of small group behaviour and insights gained from industrial disputes to interstate conflict.

John Burton and his associates at the Centre for the Analysis of Conflict in London are widely seen as the originators of this technique. Burton termed their initial efforts "exercises in controlled communication". After a pilot workshop held in London in December 1965, a follow-up second project which involved three American scholars C.F. Alger, H.C. Kelman and R.C. North - and directed at the Cyprus conflict - was held. In the same year, Leonard Doob and William Foltz of Yale University independently began to explore the need for an alternative to traditional approaches to border disputes. Their first workshop, entitled Fermeda, which dealt with border conflict involving Somalia, Ethiopia, and Kenya, took place in August 1969. Soon after this, Doob and Foltz were to apply their basic model to the conflict in Northern Ireland. Subsequently, Herbert C Kelman and Stephen Cohen developed an approach that is essentially a synthesis of Burton's and Doob's techniques. More recently, some other scholars, notably Levi and Benjamin, have amplified the technique further. [3]

Development of the problem-solving approach to conflict resolution went hand in hand with, and was influenced by, John Burton's theoretical efforts to "reconceptualise" the international system and the study of international relations, making use of

systems analysis [4] and culminating in his notion of 'world society'. [5] Central to John Burton's approach is the introduction of theoretical ideas and insights and empirical findings by the third party or intermediary, which the conflicting parties can use as analytical tools in the analysis of their own conflict and in the search for "creative solutions". Beyond such instrumental uses of theory in the course of practice (i.e. in conflict analysis and resolution), there is "an organic connection between theory and practice" in Burton's approach. Kelman (1984:xix), comments succinctly:

"...Interactive problem solving for him is not just a technique, but an alternative diplomacy appropriate to his alternative conception of the international system as a world society."

Throughout his writings, Burton has attempted to provide a 'scientific basis' to the formulation of foreign policy. Informed by the assumption that "a theory of international relations must be consistent with what we know about human behaviour and social organisation at all levels", he has drawn widely on the behavioural sciences in the development of an interdisciplinary approach. Thus, his conception of world society utilises general systems theory to provide an overarching, analytical framework, sociological writings and ideas about society to capture some of the salient relationships that characterise the global system, and the psychology of perception to explain the ways in which these relationships are observed and interpreted by a variety of international actors.

In psychological preference, Burton has shifted from an emphasis on 'perception' in the late 1960s and early 1970s to an emphasis on 'human needs' in his more recent works. [6] The concept of "universal human needs" is central to a 'paradigm shift' [7] that Burton claims characterises much of recent social science scholarship.

As a social psychologist, Doob's particular interest was in analysing and understanding the points at which psychological factors - notably in the form of images, stereotypes and interaction processes - impact upon international relations. By his own admission, although the methodological aim was to gain "clinical experience in the use of a technique called sensitivity training", Doob et al., (1970:x), argued that they were merely utilizing it "to try to create an atmosphere in which international discord might be better understood and eventually diminished".

1.3 Structure of the research

The structure of this research can be briefly outlined as follows:

Chapter 1 attempts to outline and clarify the basic problem that underlies this study. In addition, to explain the mode of enquiry and approach to the subject matter. This introductory chapter concludes with an attempt to locate the material within the broader field of international relations scholarship.

Chapter 2 attempts a selective and exploratory overview of the intellectual history of conflict research. The chapter reviews conflict research against the backdrop of four dominant perspectives on conflict. These are: Conflict in psychological perspective; conflict in sociological perspective; conflict in

philosophical perspective, and conflict in international relations. Within each of these broad perspectives, a diversity of approaches is outlined.

Chapter 3 addresses a number of conceptual issues. The key concepts used in this study, notably, "conflict", "conflict resolution", "conflict settlement", "conflict management" and "conflict structure" are clarified. The chapter ends with a typology of various types of conflict.

Chapter 4 deals with the basic notion of a problem-solving workshop and its relevance to conflict analysis and resolution. Levi and Benjamin's model of conflict resolution is selected for this purpose. The chapter starts with an exposition of the domain assumptions that inform the problem-solving workshop approach, proceeds to discuss the key elements and procedures associated with Levi and Benjamin's model of conflict resolution, and concludes with a provisional critique of problem-solving workshops in general.

Chapter 5 seeks to isolate, identify and describe the salient features of the problem-solving workshop which is associated with the research of John Burton and his colleagues. Apart from this, certain of the most important conclusions associated with this research will be presented. The chapter concludes with an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses associated with the work of Burton and his fellow researchers.

Chapter 6 analyses the problem-solving workshops organised under the direction of Leonard W Doob, William Foltz, and their associates. This discussion will be on a comparative basis, with special emphasis on the similarities and differences between the

work of Burton and that of Doob. Special attention will be given to the Fermeda and Stirling workshops [8], both of which will be subjected to critical analysis.

Chapter 7 attempts to advance certain guidelines which may facilitate the development of a more empirically-based theory of conflict resolution. Some possible areas for further investigation and research will be suggested, notably with reference to time sequence, the structure of the discussion format and the process and practice of third party intervention.

In the final chapter the major conclusions reached in this study will be briefly summarised.

Endnotes to Chapter 1

1. Notably in this respect, are the following sources:
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2. For two excellent texts on third-party intervention and mediation, see Young, Oran R., The Intermediaries: Third Parties in International Crises, Princeton University Press, Princeton, N.J., 1967; and Bercovitch, Jacob Social Conflicts and Third Parties Strategies of Conflict Resolution, Westview Press, Boulder, 1984.
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4. See, Burton, John W. Systems, States, Diplomacy and Rules, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1968.
5. See, Burton, John W. World Society, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1972, and Burton, John W., A.J.R. Groom, C.R. Mitchell and Anthony V.S. de Reuck The Study of World Society : a London Perspective, International Studies Association, Pittsburgh, 1974.
6. See, Burton, John W. Deviance, Terrorism and War : the Process of Solving Unsolved Social and Political Problems, Martin Robertson, Oxford, 1979; and Burton, John W. Dear Survivors, Frances Pinter, London, 1982.
7. The notion of a 'paradigm shift' is derived from Kuhn, Thomas S. The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, Chicago University Press, Chicago, 1970.
8. The Fermeda workshop was held in August 1969 and involved participants from Ethiopia, Somalia, and Kenya. The Stirling workshop held during August 1972 assembled 56 Catholic and Protestant citizens of Northern Ireland.

CHAPTER 2

THE EVOLUTION OF CONFLICT RESEARCH

2.1 Introduction

For centuries scholars have thought and written about the subject of conflict and war while the phenomenon of organised mass violence has been of perennial interest to historians, philosophers and politicians. [1] However, "It is only over the last four to five decades that scholars have attempted, in an interdisciplinary and systematic manner, to investigate the causes of conflict, violence and war and the problems of maintaining - indeed, defining - a condition of peace." Such endeavours are known under a variety of labels, such as 'conflict studies', 'peace research', or 'conflict analysis'. In this study the concept 'conflict research' will be used, "to convey the idea that the wide ranging research effort focuses on the phenomenon of 'conflict', wherever this might be found" (Mitchell, 1981:1).

Although this study concerns itself with recent theoretical developments, it would be wrong to assume that little scholarly interest was taken in the subject of social or international conflict before the 1930s. Robin Williams (1972), for example, has condemned what he correctly calls the 'Columbus complex' in sociology which holds conflict theory to be an invention of the 1950s, ignoring the rich legacy of sociological research and philosophical writings. Although conflict research 'came of age' in the United States in the mid-1950s, its intellectual roots go back to pioneering scholarship of the 1930s and 1940s (Richardson, 1960; Wright, 1942; Sorokin, 1937), to the peace movements of the inter-

war years and, some would argue - with considerable justification - to European philosophers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Machiavelli). However, characteristic of conflict research during the 1950s, was its growing eclecticism to the study of social conflict. [2]

The primary concern of this chapter is to attempt a selective and exploratory overview of the intellectual history of conflict research. It does not claim to be comprehensive, but rather serves as a short introduction to conflict research as a multi-disciplinary field of inquiry. In order to structure the material, conflict is examined from four dominant perspectives. These are: Conflict in psychological perspective; conflict in sociological perspective; conflict in philosophical perspective and conflict in international relations. [3] However, it needs to be emphasised, that these denote broad perspectives on conflict. A diversity of approaches is referred to under the rubric of each of these perspectives.

2.2 Conflict in psychological perspective [4]

On Rummel's, (1977:33) analysis, the salient premise underlying most psychological approaches to the study of conflict, is that "for an understanding of conflict, hostility, aggression and violence, one has to look to 'inner man'". William Bolitho's Introduction to Twelve Against the Gods, neatly encapsulates this idea, when he writes :

"The adventurer is within us, and he contends for our favour with the social man we are obliged to be. These two sorts

of life are incompatible, one we hanker after, the other we are obliged to. There is no other conflict so deep and bitter as this".

Thus, within psychological perspectives on conflict, conflict is understood with reference to 'inner man', and is invariably explained either with reference to 'the nature of man', his 'instincts', 'drives' or by 'heredity'. [5] Within this broad perspective, five distinct approaches to the study of conflict may be differentiated. These approaches are: ethology, psychotherapy, social learning, frustration - aggression, and cultural studies. Each of these five approaches will now be briefly outlined.

2.2.1 Ethology [6]

The ethological approach to the study of conflict and aggression advances a biological explanation for conflict. The sources of conflict and aggression are sought in man's 'phylogenetic nature', mainly through the ethological study of man as a member of the animal kingdom. For Konrad Lorenz, arguably the major exponent of this view, conflict and aggression constitute a "driving power, an instinct toward the preservation of life and species" (Lorenz, 1966:2). Conflict and aggression for Lorenz underlie all kinds of behaviour not only to preserve, but to evenly distribute a species spatially, to 'select the strongest', and 'to protect the young'.

Lorenz adopts what has been termed a 'hydraulic model' of aggression. Within animals, and man, 'aggressive energy' accumulates like the build-up of other basic needs such as that of biological reproduction or food. If blocked, this 'aggressive energy' may be redirected to 'substitute objects', or it may

'explode destructively' on those close by. If no adequate 'aggression - releasing stimulus' is at hand, one will be actively sought. Aggression and hence conflict, thus comes from 'within'. 'Man does not learn to be aggressive. He is born to be aggressive.' Aggression is in-born and seen as a deterministic force in human nature.

Lorenz (1966) believes that species develop a number of mechanisms for 'redirecting' or 'controlling' aggression. He cites the example of ritualised fighting in animals in which no animal is mortally wounded. Man does not have a similar mechanism. He has destroyed the natural balance through the development of technology and especially of destructive nuclear weapons. The sad paradox is that he has far exceeded the destructive capacity of any carnivore, but has no 'counterbalancing inhibitions'. Thus, he releases his aggression on his fellow man.

Lorenz sees three ways to control conflict and aggression. First, we must 'know ourselves', especially through ethology and psychoanalysis. Self-knowledge will help us devise mechanisms for 'redirecting' conflict and aggression. Second, we must promote and strengthen friendships across group divisions and boundaries, since bonds developed between diverse people, aid in inhibiting mutual aggression. Finally, and most importantly, we must 'redirect aggression' onto 'substitute objects,' such as sports and athletic competition.

Phylogenetically based studies of conflict have had considerable influence on other explanations of conflict, notably on writers that stress the 'territorial imperatives' of human behaviour, such as Eugene Marais [7], and Robert Ardrey [8], and

on scholars that advance biological explanations for conflict. The latter category includes, among others, Ashley Montagu's Man and Aggression (1968) [9]; Carthy and Ebling's The Natural History of Aggression (1964) [10]; Tiger and Fox's The Imperial Animal (1972); and Tiger's The Manufacture of Evil: Ethics, Evolution and the Industrial System (1987). [11]

Various schools of psychotherapy constitute a second approach to conflict. In contrast to ethology and related biological approaches to the study of conflict, which postulate conflict as an 'instinctual drive', such behaviour is seen here as the outcome of underlying 'psychological structures', 'processes', 'variables', and 'mechanisms'. The sources of conflict are to be found in man, "but unlike the phylogenetically single and pervasive instinct of Lorenz, conflict manifests a particular configuration of biological, social, and psychological elements, only one of which may be instinctual" (Rummel, 1977:36). (Own emphasis.)

The first psychotherapist to propose an 'aggressive drive' was Alfred Adler. In 1908 he published his theory that aggression and conflict constitute a 'superordinate drive' [11] that dominates behaviour and consciousness and is a 'confluence of other drives.' It is innate, the organizing principle of man's behaviour. "Adler soon reinterpreted this drive as a masculine protest (a drive to compensate for feelings of inferiority), and finally as an upward striving for 'perfection'" (Rummel, 1977:36).

Although, eclipsed by the work of Freud, many of Adler's ideas have been revived and reformulated by other scholars. One such reformulation is to be found in the writings of Rollo May on "existential psychotherapy".

Ethological perspectives on conflict also feature in the writings of Scott (1958); [12] Johnson (1972); [13] and Nelson (1974). [14] Common to ethological studies, is the notion that conflict is an 'instinctive drive' in man. The biological nature of man, and his interactions with basic preoccupations such as survival reproduction and security, lie at the heart of an explanation of human and social conflict. Thus, ethology shares some common ideas and explanations with social Darwinism.

Ethology, that field of biology concerned with "genetically transmitted behavioural tendencies", has had considerable impact upon political studies. One of the most interesting and important recent developments in political studies has been the rapidly expanding interest in the relationship between biology and politics. Three major foci of research have emerged, namely, 1) the implications of ethology for political studies; 2) the interplay between physiological variables and political behaviour; 3) biologically-related public policy issues, such as population control, genetic engineering, environmental pollution and so forth.

Roger Masters and Albert Somit (1976) [15] have provided a useful overview of the impact of ethology on political studies, while the noted political scientist, David Easton of Chicago, amongst others, has commented on the relevance of "biopolitics" to political theory. [16]

The ethological view of aggression and conflict is essentially reductionist and determinist. Man is seen as a victim of "aggressive" and potentially destructive "drives". Conflict is rarely portrayed as something positive and constructive, but as "negative" and "destructive". Thus, the underlying view of man tends to be a mechanistic one.

2.2.2 Psychotherapy

May's major study dealing with conflict and aggression, is entitled Power and Innocence (1972) [17]. He considers power in its various dimensions to be man's 'basic drive', and, aggression, as one specific of this drive. Power has five 'ontological levels'. In May's view (1972:40-42), these levels are: First, simply "the power to be", to exist, to assert oneself as a humanbeing (cf Heidegger 'Das Seiende'). Secondly, the 'power of self-affirmation', to be recognised, and to become significant. Thirdly, the power of 'self-assertion' of opposing opposition and opposing views. Fourthly, 'aggression', the application of power to overcome 'blocked self-assertion', and, finally, violence, to which man resorts when non-violent aggression has become meaningless or fruitless.

On May's analysis, aggression is basic to man, but culturally and socially determined and exacerbated and inculcated by a 'process of learning'. The expression of power in its aggressive, constructive forms is healthy. It is when such expression is inhibited or blocked that violence erupts. 'Violence expresses impotence.' A view also held by Konrad Lorenz.

The views of Adler and his followers stand in marked contrast to other psychoanalytical perspectives. Adler was a member of Freud's psychoanalytical school when he proposed his 'aggressive drive' in 1908. Freud initially rejected this view, believing that aggression did not constitute a 'significant instinct' or 'drive.' It was not until more than a decade later that Freud, perhaps as a result of the brutalities of World War I and its socio-political consequences, recognised an 'aggressive instinct'. This he first introduced in Beyond the Pleasure Principle (1950) [18] developing and refining the concept in his later works.

In Freud's earlier work, man was dominated by self-preservation and sexual instincts. He referred to these respectively as the 'ego' instinct and 'eros'. Aggression had no status as a separate instinct but was an integral part of 'eros' - an aspect of human sexuality. Moreover, 'eros' was a 'tension-releasing instinct'. As in the Lorenzian 'hydraulic model' of aggression, man builds up internal tensions that must be released. 'Release' (catharsis) constituted pleasure. His was essentially a mechanical conception of human nature.

In developing the idea of a 'death instinct', Freud took a strongly biological view of human nature and of human behaviour. All living things were now driven by 'two competing instincts'. One was a 'life instinct' (called eros) 'which strove to create, maintain, and unify living things into larger and more complex forms of organisation.' The 'death instinct' on the other hand, 'drove toward the disintegration and destruction of living systems'. Being the ultimate application of the 'pleasure principle', death constitutes the absence of all tension, 'the perfect state'.

The 'death instinct' is directed inward toward the destruction of the organism. To preserve the organism, the 'libido' engages in battle with the death instinct and directs it outward, whereupon it becomes external aggression as Rummel (1977:38) puts it: 'the drive for mastery, the will to power'. Aggression and conflict are therefore secondary, a deflection of the death instinct away from the self. "Moreover, in its battle with the 'libido', the death instinct may combine with eros into sadism or masochism, two of its worst common pathodological manifestations".

To Freud, then, aggression was always negative or destructive. It constituted 'anti-life' or 'pathology.' Human behaviour was a manifestation either of 'eros', of the desire for death, or of a combination of these.

Although Freud had a considerable impact on psychoanalysis, few scholars had accepted the notion of a 'death instinct,' even though some of his followers, such as Melanie Klein (1950) [19], have adopted and further amplified this view.

In a recent noteworthy study on aggression by the psychoanalyst Erich Fromm (1973) [20], the notion of the 'death instinct' is revised in the direction of current ethological findings. Freud viewed aggression as rooted in a 'death instinct', although its manifestation may blend with 'eros'. Fromm, however, recognises two independent sources, only one of which is 'instinctual'. 'Instinctual aggression' is 'benign' and 'defensive'. 'Uninstinctual aggression', rooted in man's character, is malignant and destructive.

In Fromm's (1973:198-199) view, man instinctively protects himself against threats to his survival, his freedom, and other basic concerns. Harm or destructiveness that results from this instinctive defence mechanism is unintended or purely instrumental. Thus benign aggression is purely 'reactive'. It is aroused by external stimuli, not internally generated by an increase in tension. In this Fromm's instinctual aggression differs fundamentally from that of Lorenz and Freud. Moreover, where aggression for Lorenz and Freud is largely negative, hostile, and destructive, for Fromm 'instinctual aggression' is positive, 'contributing to man's growth, self-assertion, and independence, and to the survival of the species.'

'Malignant' or 'uninstinctual aggression', however, results from specifically human passions seated in our character. Shaped by historical experience and institutions, man's 'character structure' may be full of 'vengeance, sadism, masochism, hate or destructiveness'. For Fromm, the way to reduce malignant aggression is to radically change what he terms 'techno-cybernetic society', to provide for new forms of decentralised control in which man would be freer to assert himself and to live the 'good life'.

While psychotherapy shares some ideas with biological explanations of conflict and aggression, it has advanced our knowledge of the subject, notably in the areas of social learning and personality studies.

2.2.3 Social learning

A contrasting approach to conflict is provided by social learning theory (Rotter, 1954 [21]; Mowrer, 1950 [22]; Bandura, 1973 [23]; and Walters and associates. [24] Within this approach conflict is defined socially. Man learns to be aggressive when such behaviour enables him to satisfy his wants and desires, when the aggression of others is perceived (through the mass media), to be rewarded, and when alternative non-aggressive behaviour is less effective. Bandura, 1973:222 captures the essence of this approach when he writes : "Once learned and reinforced through social approval and acquired status, through the esteem of success, and through observing the success of others, aggression will be avoided only if costs in punishment become prohibitive or negative sanctions develop and non-aggressive behavioural patterns are rewarded."

This view of conflict and aggression is essentially behavioural. There is a concern about goals and intentions, "but the focus is on stimulus-response, on observable response contingent experiences, on patterns of reinforcement or learning patterns". Laboratory experiments provide the research setting, and the findings rest upon quantitative analysis of observed and systematised data. Thus they differ in their methodology from the naturalistic observations of the "instinctivists", such as Lorenz, Scott and Johnson and the case-intuitive verstehen approach of psychotherapists. Boe and Church (1968) [25], have provided a useful overview of social learning approaches to the study of conflict.

2.2.4 Frustration-aggression

This behavioural view of conflict is shared by a variety of scholars that assert that aggression is a consequence primarily of frustrated goals, desires, needs, value expectations, or 'drives'. The intensity with which a goal is desired, the degree to which frustration blocks this desire, and the history of an individual's frustration presumably influence the extent and intensity of his aggression.

The frustration-aggression hypothesis, along with its variants such as the theory of relative deprivation, have gained currency since the pioneering work of Dollard and his colleagues at the University of Yale in 1939. The salient aspects of their view may be summarised as follows:

First, they equated aggression 'with the desire to hurt others'. Secondly, frustration was conceptualised "as interference with goal realization". On this conceptual base, the Yale group put forward its well-known proposition (Dollard, et al., 1939:1), namely:

"This study takes as its point of departure the assumption that aggression is always a consequence of frustration. More specifically the proposition is that the occurrence of aggressive behaviour always presupposes the existence of frustration and, contrawise, that the existence of frustration always leads to some form of aggression".

Dollard and his colleagues further posited a direct and positive relationship between the instigation to aggression and the degree of frustration present at any given point in time.

A variety of scholars followed on where Dollard and his associates had left off. Particularly noteworthy are the contributions of Berkowitz (1962) [26]; Davies (1962) [27] with his well-known 'J curve'; Gurr (1970, 1980) [28] with his theory of relative deprivation, and the Feierabends (1966) [29].

Although Runciman (1986) [30] also employs the concept of relative deprivation (RD), his is a sociological theory of relative deprivation in which frustration plays no role. Relative deprivation is related to the dimensions of manifest inequality existing in society. These he sees as 'class', 'status', and 'power'. Deprivation along one dimension may not be matched by deprivation along another dimension, nor is actual inequality along a dimension necessarily matched by the sense of deprivation felt.

Runciman applied his theory of relative deprivation of the manual working class in England, both historically and to aggregate data of various societies he collected by means of surveys.

Frustration-aggression theory and its variants such as relative deprivation enjoy relatively widespread popularity, and constitutes an important psychological perspective on conflict. In Zimmerman's view (1977:19-22), the frustration-aggression approach to conflict constitutes 'a major and useful perspective on conflict', especially because it has influenced other approaches such as learning theory. Berkowitz (1973), for instance has had considerable influence upon the writings of social learning theorists such as Bandura, Walters and his associates.

2.2.5 Cultural studies

There is one final approach to consider under the rubric of conflict in psychological perspective, that of the cultural anthropologists notably Alexander Alland (1972). [31] The basic premise here is that aggression is embedded within a culture; it is learned in the same way a language is learned. To understand conflict the researcher should focus on the cultural context of aggression and its functions in the maintenance and development of that culture.

The basic observation is that some cultures are relatively free of collective conflict and seldom manifest interpersonal violence and destructiveness. Therefore, although man has the potentiality for aggressive behaviour, whether it actually manifests itself is a matter of cultural learning. Man is not

aggressive. Cultures are aggressive, even imperialistic.

Cultural studies share with social learning theory and emphasis on external (environmental) factors - on learning. However, they differ in methodology. While social learning theory centres on quantitative laboratory experimentation, cultural studies concentrate on the naturalistic observation of cultures. They differ also in focus. Learning theory emphasises that which impinges on the individual. It focuses on the individual, stressing the development of aggression as an interaction between responses, reinforcement, stimuli, and so forth. The cultural approach, however, is less concerned with the individual and some determinate variables than with the total field of societal norms, meanings, and values within which certain culturally induced behavioural patterns emerge, and the processes of socialisation at work in such a culture.

A further psychological cause and condition of conflict is to be found in the view that conflict and war are the consequence of misperception. This view has been advanced by some scholars, notably by White (1966) [32], who argued that the conflict in Vietnam was a consequence of grave misperception on the part of the United States of America. This explanation of conflict rests on the premise that as Burton (1968:67) puts it: "The origin of conflict can be frequently traced to false perception".

In conclusion, this section of this chapter served to identify five general approaches under the rubric "conflict in psychological perspective". These approaches contend that conflict and aggression result from an instinct shared with all animals, from an instinct or 'drive' manifested through particularly human,

subconscious, psychological mechanisms and processes, from an acquired response pattern, from frustrated goals, or from cultural learning. More generally, these five approaches view conflict and aggression as emanating from man's 'instincts or drives', from environmental and social influences, or some combination of these factors. Aggression is inherited or learned or both.

In the following section we intend focusing on 'conflict in sociological perspective'. Like the preceding section the material will be presented in skeletal form, since the purpose of this chapter is to provide a selective overview of the evolution of conflict research as an interdisciplinary field of inquiry.

The study of conflict and aggression from a psychological perspective has contributed greatly to our understanding of some of the biological and cultural sources of conflict. While there is a tendency to view man deterministically, especially within the ethological approach, social learning and cultural studies show sensitivity to social processes and environmental factors. Cultural explanations in particular, have contributed significantly to our understanding of conflict, notably in non-Western societies. The seminal and controversial study by Adda B. Bozeman, titled Conflict in Africa - Concepts and Realities (Princeton University Press, 1976), deserves special mention.

2.3 Conflict in sociological perspective

Like the previous category, this category is wide - encompassing a broad spectrum of approaches to the study of conflict. Sociological contributions to the study of conflict are not only wide-ranging, but are of great significance for an understanding of the dynamics

of conflict. An entire school within sociological scholarship uses conflict as its focus and 'organising principle'.

One of the most powerful sociological explanations of social conflict is that of Karl Marx, who posited a class struggle between proletariat and bourgeoisie intrinsic to capitalist, industrial society. Conflict and its role in the changing of social systems (rather than within systems) is central in the philosophy of Marx. According to Marx, conflict leads not only to ever-changing relations within the existing social structure, but the total social system undergoes transformation through conflict (Coser, 1967:25).

Marx viewed the structure of society in relation to its major classes, and the struggle between them as the engine of change in this structure. His was no equilibrium or consensus theory. Conflict was not a deviational phenomenon within society's structure, but the very essence of its existence. The driving force of history.

The key to understanding Marx is his definition of a 'class'. A class is defined by the ownership of property. Such ownership vests in a person with the power to exclude others from the property and to use it for personal gain and advantage. In relation to property there are three classes in society : the bourgeoisie (who own the means of production such as machinery and factories, and whose source of income is profit), landowners (whose income is rent), and the proletariat (who own their labour and sell it for a wage).

The force transforming latent class membership into class struggle is class interest. Out of similar class situations, individuals come to act similarly. Similar class situations imply similar class interests, but because the relation to production is different between classes their interests are also different. This makes for inevitable conflict - conflict which is class - based.

On Marx's analysis, the development of class conflict, the struggle between classes was initially confined to individual factories. Eventually, given the expansion of capitalism, the growing disparity between life conditions on the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, and the increasing homogenisation within each class, individual struggles become generalised to coalitions across factories. Increasingly class conflict is manifested at the societal level. Class consciousness is increased, common interests and policies are formulated, and a struggle for political power ensues. Classes become vital political forces.

The distribution of political power is determined by power over production (i.e. capital). Capital confers political power, which the bourgeoisie uses to legitimise and protect their property and consequent social relations. Class relations are socio-political. Moreover, the ideas and interests justifying the use of state power and its distribution, are those of the ruling class. The politico-social systems are mere superstructures resting on the relations of production, on ownership of the means of production.

Finally, the division between classes will widen and the condition of the exploited worker will deteriorate so badly that the social structure collapses. The class struggle is transformed into a proletarian revolution. The triumph of the workers will

eliminate the basis of class division in property through public ownership of the means of production. With the basis of class formation thus removed, a classless society will ensue, and since political power to protect the bourgeoisie against the workers is unnecessary, political authority and the state will wither away.

The salient elements of Marx's view of class conflict may be itemised as follows:

- (1) Classes are authority relationships based on the ownership of property.
- (2) A 'class' denotes individuals with shared interests.
- (3) Classes are naturally antagonistic by virtue of their interests.
- (4) Political organisation and power is an instrument of class struggle, and reigning ideas reflected by it.
- (5) Structural change is a consequence of the class struggle.

Marx's emphasis on class conflict as constituting the dynamics of social change, his observation that change was not random but the outcome of a conflict of interests, and his view of social relations as based on power were contributions of the first magnitude. However, time and history have invalidated many of his assumptions and predictions.

A noteworthy sociological contribution to the theory of social conflict came from the German sociologist Ralf Dahrendorf. His Soziale Klassen und Klassenkonflikt in der industriellen Gesellschaft [33], first published in 1957 was soon to be translated, revised, and expanded in Class and Class Conflict in an Industrial Society which appeared in 1959. [34]

Dahrendorf (1959:119) recognises two competing 'paradigms' of society, which he respectively terms the 'utopian' and the 'rationalist'. "The first emphasises equilibrium of values, consensus, and stability. The second revolves around dissension and conflict, the latter being the engine of structural change." Both are social perspectives. Neither is completely incorrect, but each mirrors a separate face of society. Regrettably, he argues, the consensus view has dominated contemporary sociology, especially in the United States, and he sets out to create some balance-between the two paradigms by developing and illustrating the explanatory power of a class-conflict perspective.

He begins with a useful review of Marx's writings, a clarification of his model, a discussion of the sociopolitical changes since Marx. A review of subsequent sociological works on class, is followed by a sociological critique of Marx. These necessary scholarly chores completed, Dahrendorf presents his own view of class and of class conflict.

In the second part of his book (1959), entitled "Toward a Sociological Theory of Conflict in Industrial Society", although building on past theoretical foundations, the author advances a number of new and useful insights. One of these is his distinction between two dimensions of social conflict, namely intensity and violence.

"Intensity refers to the energy expenditure and degree of involvement of conflicting parties...By contrast, the violence of conflict relates rather to its manifestations than to its causes; it is a matter of the weapons that are chosen..." (1959:211-212).

These two dimensions of conflict, Dahrendorf argues, may vary independently and are therefore distinct aspects of any conflict situation. He discusses specific situations in which either intensity or violence or both are minimized or increased. For example, organised conflict groups tend to use less violent means of combat than those that lack organisation. These and other valuable analytical distinctions have [all] been incorporated into a more general theory of social conflict.

Dahrendorf continued his concern for a theory of social conflict in a series of important papers, among these: "Out of Utopia : Toward a Reorientation of Sociological Analysis" (1958) [35], and "Toward a Theory of Social Conflict" (1958). [36] Dahrendorf's contribution is noteworthy for his introduction of useful analytical distinctions, and for his critique of Parsonian functionalism. Perhaps Dahrendorf's best - though still incomplete - statement of conflict theory is to be found in his Essays in the Theory of Society. Here he developed the thesis that a basic aspect of social life is that people living together have different interests which come into conflict with each other. Some of these individuals gain more power than others, and use their power to pursue their own interests. It is 'social power,' especially the control over sanctions, which serves both to organise society and to institutionalise the basic conflicts over interests present in the society.

Other useful studies of conflict within sociological perspective include those of John Rex, a British sociologist, especially his Key Problems of Sociological Theory, published in 1961. [37] In this publication, Rex advances an impressive

critique of Dahrendorf, Coser and Gluckman, especially for neglecting or underemphasising large-scale societal conflict.

A very useful synthesis was provided by Pierre van den Berghe, in an article entitled "Dialectic and Functionalism : Toward a Theoretical Synthesis" [38], published in 1963. He argues that both functionalism (a la Parsons and Durkheim) and the Hegelian - Marxian dialectic, present 'one-sided but complementary and reconcilable views of society.'

Johan Galtung of the University of Oslo, has made a significant contribution to the sociology of conflict. Most of his articles have appeared in The Journal of Peace Research (Oslo) which he edits. Among his many papers, his "A Structural Theory of Aggression" [39], published in 1964, is especially useful.

Galtung advances the thesis that conflict and aggression between individuals, groups, and nations is most likely to arise when their respective social positions are in "rank-disequilibrium", that is, when individuals or groups have dissimilar ranks in different status dimensions so that they are "topdogs" in one dimension (and) yet "underdogs" in another. This conceptualisation is applied to a variety of areas from relations between nations to revolutions and deviant behaviour. Noteworthy also is Galtung's notion of "structural violence", which has enriched our conceptual language.

Worth mentioning is a paper by Raymond W. Mack and Richard C. Snyder, entitled "The Analysis of Social Conflict - Toward an Overview and Synthesis" [40], published in 1957. In Coser's view it is still "one of the best codifications of theoretical and empirical work in the area of social conflict. It remains

indispensable to any student in this field of inquiry" (Coser, 1967:6).

No overview of conflict within sociological perspective can be complete - or even marginally useful - without reference to the contributions of Lewis Coser, Max Gluckman, Pitirim Sorokin, Georges Sorel, and Georg Simmel.

The noted sociologist Lewis Coser, has provided a seminal treatment of the functions of social conflict. His two most famous works in this respect are, The Functions of Social Conflict [41], first published in 1954, and his Continuities in the Study of Social Conflict [42], which appeared in 1967. In both of these studies, Coser distinguishes between two functions of social conflict, namely that of "integration" and "coercion". Both of these consequences of social conflict have been admirably analysed by Coser. He is concerned with what he termed the "positive" or "integrative functions" of conflict. In this, he has been criticised by other sociologists, notably by Dahrendorf (1959:207). Dahrendorf argues that Coser emphasises the integrative potential of conflict and that his functionalist view of society is inadequate and essentially static.

On the one hand, Coser states in the unmistakable terminology of the consensus view of society, that :

"Conflict may serve to remove dissociating elements in a relationship and to re-establish unity. Insofar as conflict is the resolution of tension between antagonists it has stabilizing functions and becomes integrating components of the relationship. However, not all conflicts are positively functional for the relationship... . Loosely structured

groups, and open societies, by allowing conflicts, institute safeguards against the type of conflict which would endanger basic consensus and thereby minimize the danger of divergencies touching core values. The interdependence of antagonistic groups and the crisscrossing within such conflicts, which serve to 'sew the social system together' by cancelling each other out, thus prevent disintegration along one primary line of cleavage" (1954:80).

On the other hand, Coser (1957:197) follows Sorel in postulating "the idea that conflict prevents the ossification of the social system by exerting pressure for innovation and creativity".

Conflict may, indeed, from Coser's perspective, be viewed together with role allocation, socialisation, and mobility as one of the "tolerable" processes which foster rather than endanger the stability of social systems (cf Dahrendorf, 1959:207).

Coser (1954:73) has also made a significant conceptual contribution with his distinction between what he calls "Basic cleavage conflict" - conflict over the very nature of a consensual framework within which groups and individuals have to operate - and conflicts over means and subordinate ends within such a consensual framework.

While specific attention will be given to Coser's contributions toward an understanding of the dynamics of conflict in other parts of this study, it can be safely asserted that his contribution has been a lasting one.

In the early 1960s the noted anthropologist Max Gluckman of the University of Manchester published two works which dealt with conflict and its regulation in "tribal societies", namely, his

Custom and Conflict in Africa (1956(a)), [43] and Politics, Law and Ritual in Tribal Society (1956(b)). [44] The central thesis of the first work involved an analysis of "how men quarrel in terms of certain of their customary allegiances, but are restrained from violence through other conflicting allegiances which are also enjoined on them by custom. The result is that conflict in one set of relationships...lead to re-establishment of social cohesion" (Gluckman, 1956(a):2).

Gluckman drew upon the work of some leading British anthropologists of the time, notably E.E. Evans-Pritchard, Elizabeth Colson, Meyer Fortes and Isaac Shapera. Other anthropologists of that period that have made significant contributions to the understanding of conflict in non-Western societies, include Ruth Benedict Patterns of Culture (1935) [45] and Lucy Mair Primitive Government (1962). [46]

Gluckman and Coser's importance stems from the fact that they both emphasised the functionality of conflict, in line with Sorel and Merton.

In Rummel's (1977:116ff) view, one of the best contemporary sociological analyses of the view that similarity between people attracts and consideration of the evidence both for and against this view, is Sorokin's chapter "The Roles of Similarity and Dissimilarity in Social Solidarity and Antagonism", in his highly rated Society, Culture and Personality (1969). [47]

Sorokin begins by introducing three major views on this question. One is that similarity between people leads to expressions of solidarity, such as marriage or friendship. Another view holds that dissimilarity leads to solidarity, as in the notion

that opposites attract; and, finally, that both similarity and dissimilarity lead to solidarity. The latter view includes theories of Durkheim [48], Tönnies [49], and MacIver [50], which respectively divide solidarity into 'mechanical versus organic,' 'gemeinschaft versus gesellschaft,' 'community versus association.'

Sorokin then considers the view "that similarity leads to solidarity" in its most popular and widespread contemporary manifestation : that similar people would marry each other. His survey of the empirical evidence tends to support this view. But the evidence shows only a relatively weak tendency, and as Sorokin notes, there is every reason to question this. First, the correlations between marriage and similarity are low. Secondly, the findings are not consistent regarding what constitutes similarity. Sorokin finally concludes that he must reject the theory that similar people necessarily marry. He also rejects the opposite view that dissimilarity leads to solidarity.

Sorokin then examines the view that similarity and dissimilarity in combination underlie solidarity. Regarding the relation of similarity and dissimilarity to solidarity in general, Sorokin first asserts that the identity of the elements that comprise socially relevant similarity and dissimilarity depends "on the socio-cultural mentality" of the people concerned, thus on their meanings and values. This dimension ultimately constitutes significant similarity or not. Secondly, and somewhat more problematically, if the characteristics are unimportant within a system of values, similarities or dissimilarities between them are unrelated to solidarity or antagonism.

A third generalisation is that significant socio-cultural similarity generates social solidarity if (a) the values for all are abundant and sufficient, to put it differently, the values can be shared by all, such as God for Christians, pride for patriots, or truth for scholars; (b) the egos of the parties are fused into "we", as in a family, intimate friendship, or a close association and (c) the relevant norms - standards or rules of conduct are concordant (cf Rummel, 1977:116).

A fourth proposition is that conflict is generated by similarity if (a) values such as land, status, or food are scarce and the norms are permeated by an egoistic competition and discord; (b) and the norms are divergent and the values cannot be shared by all. Fifthly, if two people hold quite dissimilar values, and those of one party are considered unimportant by the other party, neither solidarity nor conflict is generated.

A final proposition put forward by Sorokin, is that solidarity is enhanced if the 'core values' and norms are similar, and the 'secondary values' are supplementary, or at least diverse or neutral. Thus a marriage between people belonging to different racial or religious groupings, can attain solidarity, provided that the partners' main or core values are similar and their secondary values and norms are not discordant.

Apart from this valuable sociological contribution to conflict and its dynamic, Sorokin has also ventured to discuss conflict, war, and internal disturbances within a broader historico-sociological perspective. For Sorokin, conflict is part of the process of rapidly changing social relationships. Sorokin viewed social systems as causal - functional entities - as an

'integrated set of meanings, values, and norms; of social interactions of official norms and laws.'

In Sorokin's view, all societies change and the "official law-norms" of the state have to make provision for new "law-norms" through legislation, decrees, judicial interpretation of governing law-norms, or constitutional revisions. These means of adjustment may not suffice, however, and a widening discrepancy between official "law-norms" and unofficial law convictions can develop. This can result in escalating conflict between different groups within the state, as one group supports official "law-norms" and another feels that these "are obsolete, unjust, or exploitative" (Sorokin, 1957:102). Presently South Africa provides an example in point!

The eventual consequence of this is a breakdown in organised relations (such as the state), and thus in the social equilibrium. The system of values and norms is undermined; order and peace disappear. The result is widespread social conflict.

Within this perspective that views conflict as a process of change, Sorokin sets out to determine the historical trends in war of what he terms "internal disturbances". He developed a scale of the "intensity, duration, scope, and importance" of these conflicts, which he analysed over twenty-five year periods for classical Greece, for Rome, and separately for the major West European nations. He found some of the following interesting trends:

- (a) There is no positive correlation between war and internal disturbances, they fluctuate independently over time.
- (b) War and revolutions tend to increase during periods of significant socio-political transition, especially

when such transition takes place from "sensate" to "ideational" culture. [51]

- (c) The peak of internal disturbances are periods of transition in social relations - the real historical turning points. Sorokin's interesting and significant contribution toward a deeper understanding of conflict, may be summarised as follows:
- (i) Conflict is "a manifestation of rapid transition between different systems of organised relationships." As such, conflict and violence are "permanently working forces, inherently connected with the essence of social life itself, which do not permit either a complete elimination or the unlimited growth of disturbances" (Sorokin, 1957:592).
 - (ii) Manifest conflict is the effect of a breakdown in the formal "law-norms" of society.
 - (iii) Sorokin makes no provision for the notions of latent conflict or of conflict situations. Values or official "law-norms" become incongruent, and disruption causes unrest and conflict. "The idea of latent or incipient conflict groups or classes, is not an explicit part of his perspective, although implicit within it" (Rummel, 1977:148).
 - (iv) Sorokin ignores the mechanism by which the disruptions or breakdown occurs. The notion of precipitating or "trigger events" is omitted from his theory. There is simply incongruence and incompatibility of values; then disruption and conflict.

In a useful overview of Pitirim Sorokin's works on conflict and war, Eckhardt (1983:147-177), notes that his view of conflict and its resolution has changed considerably over time.

In the 1920s he held a 'power view' of peace, similar to the "peace through strength" theories so common today. In the 1930s 'peace' was presented as a function of stable cultures and integrated values. In the 1940s the 'Golden Rule' pointed the way to reconciliation and peace. In the 1950s 'love' was the only way to peace. Even later 'peace' was to be achieved by stripping governments of their power through universal disarmament and by establishing a 'universal moral order', a set of values to which all people could give their allegiance.

Sorokin's writings not only reflected some of the salient changes in conflict research over the last sixty or more years, but also influenced some of those changes.

The syndicalist philosopher, Georges Sorel, had a considerable influence on the writing of Lewis Coser. The latter followed Sorel in postulating the notion that conflict 'prevents the ossification of the social system by exerting pressure for innovation and creativity'. Both Sorel and Coser emphasised the functionality of conflict, and in doing so have contributed significantly toward an understanding of its dynamic.

The German theorist Georg Simmel, has written extensively on the sociological nature of conflict. His famous essay Der Streit [52], first published in 1908, provides a seminal treatment of conflict within sociological perspective. On Simmel's analysis, conflict has both negative and positive aspects. These aspects are closely interrelated - they can be separated conceptually, but not empirically (Simmel, 1955:14). In a sociological sense, conflict resolves the tension between 'contrasts or opposites'.

Simmel also addressed the problem of the sociological relevance of conflict. On his analysis, conflict is basic toward an

understanding of the unity ("Einheit") in social relations.

Contradiction and conflict not only precede this unity, but are operative in it at every moment of its existence. Similarly, there probably exists no social unit in which convergent and divergent views and values among its members are inseparably interwoven. An absolutely centripetal and harmonious group, a pure "unification" ("Vereinigung"), not only is empirically impossible, "it could show no real life process" (Simmel 1955:15). Just as the universe needs "love and hate", that is, "attractive" and "repulsive forces", in order to have any form at all, so society, too, "in order to attain a determinate shape, needs some quantitative ratio of harmony and disharmony, of association and competition, of favourable and unfavourable tendencies." (Ibid.) But these discords are by no means mere sociological liabilities or negative forces in society. Conflict itself is a vital 'integrative force' in both small groups (such as the marital couple), and in social relations and systems. Thus, the Hindu social system rests not only on hierarchy, but also directly on the mutual repulsion, of the caste system. Conflict not only prevents boundaries within and between groups from gradually disappearing, but is salient for the maintenance of group cohesion.

Essentially, Simmel argues, that the 'contrasting forces of conflict and of unification, of homogeneity and of heterogeneity in social relations,' are vital for the cohesion of social systems. In his view, conflict is sociologically of great significance, because it denotes a basic form of association. The two opposing principles of "conflict" and "unification", provide the dynamic that integrates both small groups and societal relationships (Simmel 1955:359).

Apart from Simmel's contribution toward an understanding of the dynamic and sociological significance of conflict, he also contributed conceptually, especially with his discussion of "legal" and "interest conflicts". (Simmel 1955:35-43).

Sociologists have contributed greatly to conflict research, in the sense that a sub-field called "Conflict sociology" emerged within sociological discourse. The contributions of noted sociologists such as Marx, Dahrendorf, Simmel and Coser, and that of other scholars notably Neil Smelser and William Kornhauser in the area of collective behaviour, have been of lasting importance to conflict studies.

Having briefly surveyed the understanding of conflict within sociological perspective, conflict will now be discussed within philosophical perspective. Like the previous discussion, it will of necessity be skeletal and broadly focused.

2.4 Conflict in philosophical perspective

For centuries man has been captivated by what Rummel (1977:167) called "a philosophy of opposition", a belief in reality as a manifestation of an underlying struggle between "opposing or contradictory tendencies, elements, or forces". An insight into the nature of these 'oppositions' was believed to provide an essential understanding of history, and of harmony, conflict, and change.

Greek philosophy, under the influence of Anaximander and, especially, of Heraclitus, "believed that reality comprised opposites whose unity underpinned all things" (Durant, 1939:138; Burnet, 1957). [53] For Heraclitus, the key to understanding

reality was the perpetual conflict of opposing forces and ideas. Reality is made up of opposites, such as white-black, day-night, up-down, hot-cold.

This philosophical point of departure is also to be found in the yin-yang of classical Chinese philosophy, elaborated in the commentaries of I-Ching. The yin and the yang are complementary principles or forces, capable of explaining all processes of social development and decay. "Yin, is the negative, passive, weak, or destructive element present in all things, and yang the coexisting positive, active, strong, and constructive element. All change manifests an interaction between these two complementary forces. Harmony is their equilibrium, conflict their opposition" (Rummel, 1977:168).

A similar reasoning can also be found in the 'Pair of Opposites of Buddhism' (Humphreys, 1955) [54], or in the blending of the two antagonistic forces (the life-monad versus matter) in non-Aryan Indian philosophy (Zimmer, 1969:379), in medieval Christianity (as in the coincidentia oppositorum of Nicholas of Cusa), and in Marxist philosophy.

A belief in a basic opposition in all things has had its greatest modern influence through Marxism, and especially through Engels' contribution. For Engels (1934, 1954) [55], the unity and struggle of opposites was one of the dialectic laws through which change is understood and explained. Without a tension between opposites, the world would be unchanging : the overcoming and being overcome of opposing ideas and forces explain all natural and human evolution.

Contemporary Maoism (Mao, Vol. 2, 1965) combines this Western dialectic notion of opposites with a classic Chinese perspective. Contradiction - defined as 'the unity of opposites' - constitutes a universal principle capable of explaining all change. The principal internal contradictions, as that between proletariat and bourgeoisie in capitalism, provide the real understanding of the direction and dynamic of change, for it will constitute a conflict between these opposites and the eventual triumph of one over the other.

Like all theories of conflict, philosophical perspectives on conflict, rest on assumptions about human nature and on visions of the "good" or "ideal" society. On the basis of their views of human nature and their descriptions of the societies of their times, Bernard (1983) [56], developed a fourfold typology of conflict and consensus theories. "Conservative consensus theorists", such as Aristotle, Aquinas, and Locke, employ consensus terminology in describing their respective societies and share a basically consensus view of human nature. "Sociological consensus theorists" like Hobbes, Durkheim, and Parsons employ consensus terminology in analysing their respective societies but hold a less benign, more conflictual view of man. Hobbes in particular, is noted for his view of man, and how it related to the so-called "problem of order". "Radical conflict theorists", such as Plato, Rousseau and Marx, utilised a conflict terminology for analysing their respective societies, but took an optimistic view of human nature. Finally, "Sociological conflict theorists" like Machiavelli and Dahrendorf use a conflict terminology to analyse society and share an essentially conflict vision of human nature.

In the case of Machiavelli, nearly everything that he said about politics was based on the assumption that human nature is essentially selfish, and that the effective motives on which a statesman must rely are egoistic, such as the desire for security in the masses and the desire for power in rulers. Government is really founded upon the weakness and insufficiency of the individual, who is unable to protect himself against the aggression of others unless supported by the power of the state. Human nature, moreover, is profoundly aggressive and acquisitive; men aim to keep what they have and to acquire more. Neither in power nor in possessions is there any normal limit to human desires, while both power and possessions are always in fact limited by natural scarcity. Accordingly, men are always in a condition of strife and competition which threatens open anarchy unless restrained by the force behind the law, while the power of the rule is built upon the very imminence of anarchy and the fact that security is possible only when government is strong.

While examinations of the consensus-conflict debate in philosophy often begin with the works of Auguste Comte and Karl Marx, both of these scholars wrote in the context of long intellectual traditions going back to the time of classical Greek philosophy (Bernard, 1983:30). Comte, cited Aristotle as his "incomparable predecessor", while the writings of Marx, argued Popper, grew out of the Platonic tradition (Popper, 1968, 12:162). Thus a philosophical discussion of conflict has to start with the earliest philosophical writings, proceed to the works of classical Greek scholarship, and continue to analyse the contribution made by modern and contemporary philosophers. Clearly, this falls outside

the scope of this study. However, this short and exploratory overview of conflict in philosophical perspective has been included to emphasise the point that conflict like so much else can be better understood within this perspective, for as Peter Winch has argued so convincingly, social science has (and should have), a special relation to philosophy (Winch, 1958). Kenneth Waltz (1959) [57], provides a short but useful overview of conflict in philosophical perspective. Philosophically, he argues, conflict has been viewed within three broad divisions. First, those scholars like St Augustine and Spinoza, who, as Morgenthau [58] and Niebuhr [59] later, found the causes of conflict and war in the nature and behaviour of man; second, those like Plato [60], Kant [61] and Bentham [62], who found the basic sources of conflict in the political structures, and the social and economic conditions of separate states; and third, those like Rousseau [63] and James Mill [64], who found the major causes neither in men nor the state but in the international system based on states.

While there is a diversity of approaches that can be grouped under the rubric of conflict within philosophical perspective, this broad perspective is of special importance to the evolution of conflict research. Its importance stems from two considerations. Firstly, the fact that philosophy provides the broadest possible canvas for the understanding of human action, and secondly, that for an understanding of the intellectual history of the social sciences, it is clearly indispensable.

In the following section, the focus shifts to 'conflict in international relations'. Clearly, this section is of greater importance to this study than the previous sections, therefore it

will be discussed at greater length and depth. However, the emphasis is on the evolution of conflict research as such, rather than on a detailed examination of the various contributions to this field of inquiry.

2.5 Conflict in international relations

As Nicholson, (1970:19) reminds us, "it is only comparatively recently that the causes of conflict, of peace and war have been regarded as suitable material for generalisation, study, and detailed theorisation. Grand theories of war have appeared as features of grand theories of society, but the analysis of war has taken the form of detailed analysis of particular wars, rather than the analysis of war as an aspect of human behaviour".

Two relatively early attempts at a scientific theory of conflict and war were those propounded by Hobson (1902) [65] and subsequently adapted by Lenin (1917) and that by Von Clausewitz. [66] The former theory asserted that war and conflict are the outcome of struggles relating to colonialism and imperialism. Nicholson (1970:19-20) provides the following useful summary: "The capitalists of one nation find that the rate of return on their capital in domestic investment falls. More profitable investments are to be found in the underdeveloped countries. However, the capitalists of other states are similarly involved in the systematic exploitation of the poorer areas of the world. So long as there are plenty of areas to be exploited, capitalists can keep out of each other's way, but as the supply of 'virgin territory' is lapped up they come into conflict. As, according to Marxist theory, the state is the tool of the ruling class, in this case the

capitalists, the various groups can call upon the assistance of their states to help enforce their particular claims. The states thus come into conflict and war follows."

On Nicholson's analysis (1970:20), we must give this explanation of conflict and war credit for being an attempt to formulate a general theory, "however convenient it happened to be ideologically, but fault it for its inadequacy." Unfortunately, he adds, that there "still exists nothing even resembling an adequate theory to fill the vacuum."

Von Clausewitz made a lasting contribution to the study of war, when he defined war as 'a continuation of politics by different means'.

The development of the study of war and conflict as a branch of the social sciences began much more clearly after the First World War, as one of the consequences of this destructive experience for the world. Lewis Fry Richardson, an English Quaker, produced a remarkable mathematical and statistical discussion of the problems of war, entitled Statistics of Deadly Quarrels [67]; and Quincy Wright, working at the University of Chicago, produced in 1947 a monumental volume titled A Study of War [68] in which he attempted to encompass all approaches to war which had been made (Zawodny, 1966).

Richardson was the first person in his field to recognise that, not only is it necessary to collect statistical data, but also to test hypotheses by statistical means. A similar development was going on in economics at the same time, but Richardson was apparently unaware of this. Richardson was, in fact, not a social scientist, but a meteorologist. He did his work on the causes of

war in the period from the end of the Great War until his death in 1950. His major contributions are contained in two books published posthumously, Arms and Insecurity [69] and the already mentioned Statistics of Deadly Quarrels.

Since the Second World War there has been a much heightened interest in the study of the causes of war, and social scientists have entered the field in a variety of ways. The destructiveness and trauma of the Second World War itself, greatly stimulated serious scholarship into the causes of wars, and their prevention.

The second reason for the renewed interest by social scientists in the problem of war and peace is the important development of new research techniques since the end of the Second World War. The statistical testing of hypotheses in such disciplines as economics, still in its infancy before the war, has progressed enormously. Furthermore, the invention of the computer and its now quite widespread accessibility, has greatly extended the scope of the social scientist's analysis.

Finally, the technological revolution that followed the Second World War in general, and the development of new and superior military technology, especially nuclear weapons in particular, have dominated much of the scholarship in the 1950s and early sixties (Höglund & Ulrich, 1972:77-78).

After the Second World War, the pioneering scholarship of Richardson and Quincy Wright, was followed by a number of scholars who developed a variety of approaches for the study of conflict. The major approaches that crystallised in this period, were statistical descriptions of war; the theory of games; the theory of alliances; the theory of arms races; experimental approaches

(notably simulation), and studies that emphasised bargaining and third-party intervention. The latter category also includes the various workshops that have been proposed to deal with international crises. Each of these major approaches, and their variants, will now be briefly outlined.

2.5.1 Statistical descriptions of war

Wars are events which take place with relative frequency in social life. Statistical analysis can assist us as to how frequently. We might also tentatively assume that statistical analysis might give us some insights into the causes of war - rather indirectly - by suggesting factors which are related to each other. Simply getting a relationship is not, of course, by itself telling us that there is a casual relationship present, but it does give us some idea of where to start our analysis.

The objection to using statistical analysis of war, which is made by classical historical theorists of the international system, is that all wars are different. However, even if we accept this argument, it seems unlikely that, of the 315 wars reported by Richardson in his Statistics of Deadly Quarrels as having taken place between 1820 and 1949, some characteristics were not shared by "clusters of war". Nicholson (1970:31), comments as follows: "It seems more plausible to hypothesise that there are some connecting links than that there are none. In view of the frequency of war, it is certainly worth a try".

The statistical analysis of conflict and war, involves the classifying of data in some manner. Obvious ways of classifying wars are according to the adversaries involved, the number of

participants, the sources of war, and so on. Another important basis for classification is the size (scope) of war. This is an obvious way of getting some indication of its importance and, in any case, the size itself is taken to be a matter of significance. However, the issue of the size and intensity of a war, is in itself problematic.

One indicator of the size and intensity of a war which suggests itself immediately is the victims of people killed. Nicholson (1970:31-32), comments : "Other indicators are the amount of destruction or the number of people both killed and injured. The objection to the first is that it is extremely difficult to measure, both because of the difficulty of getting raw data and then of valuing it. Monetary value is, at best, a crude guide. It is inherently problematic to compare property values (as one example) from different periods. The difficulty with the other measure lies in the definition of wounded, which can vary widely. Furthermore, counts of wounded, particularly in earlier wars, were rather rough and ready".

A virtue of using size as a criterium for classification, is that it is reasonably objective and does not run into the legal definition of war. Size classification, Nicholson (1970:32) reminds us, in getting round one difficulty of definition leads itself in another one. When is a violent conflict too small to be called a war? Richardson tackles this problem rather bluntly by drawing no distinction between "world war", on the one hand, and "murders" on the other. All constitute incidents of "deadly quarrels". Moreover, the destructive potential of modern weapon systems renders Richardson's indicators of size and intensity useless.

While Richardson was the pioneer in the collection and analysis of statistical data about the international system, a great deal of work has gone on since then, both in the collection and analysis of data. The application of the technique of factor analysis in particular, has yielded new results. One of the most startling results which has come out of one factor analysis study is the fact that there is only a slightly positive relationship between foreign and domestic conflict (Tanter, 1966). [70] In general, one would expect that nations which were prone to violence internally would similarly be prone to external violence, but this is not always the case.

Attempts at quantification of the international political system have gained renewed impetus through political risk-analyses. The so-called "behavioural revolution" of the fifties and the sixties, has contributed toward the quantification of theories of international relations. The best known, and more important, of these behavioural studies are : Political System Stability Index (PSSI), and World Political Risk Forecasts (WPRF). On their part, these studies drew upon the works of various noted scholars, notably McClelland's World Event Interaction Survey (WEIS) [71], Azar's Conflict and Peace Data Bank (COPDAB) [72], Rummel's Dimensionalities of Nations (DON) [73], and Singer and his associates' Correlates of War Project. [74] Apart from Richardson's pioneering statistical analysis of war, Singer and Jones (1972) [75] and Singer and Small (1972) [76] have contributed much to this approach. Their respective contributions published in 1972, and titled Beyond Conjecture: Data-Based Research in International

Politics (with Susan Jones) and The Wages of War, 1916-1965: A Statistical Handbook (with Melvin Small), provide a sound introduction to statistical analyses of conflict and war.

For a summary of the research design and some results, see J.D. Singer, "The 'Correlates of War' Project : Interim Report and Rationale", World Politics, vol. 24, no. 2 (Jan. 1972), pp.243-270.

While statistical studies of conflict and war have yielded rather limited insights into the causes of conflict and war, they have contributed toward the formulation of useful hypotheses for the construction of empirically based theories of conflict.

2.5.2 The theory of games

The theory of games is the not altogether appropriate name of a body of theory which describes how 'rational people' should make decisions in some rather stylised conflict situations. The theory has many ramifications.

The subject first came to prominence in 1944 with the publication of John Von Neumann and Oscar Morgenstern's The Theory of Games and Economic Behaviour. [79] The theory had been developing slowly during the interregnum years, one name of significance being that of the French mathematician Emile Borel. "Von Neumann, too, was working on the problem at the time, and to him must go the main share of the credit for the theory in its present form" (Nicholson, 1970:51).

In its pure form, the theory of games is a branch of pure mathematics. From a particular set of mathematical propositions, interesting and sometimes surprising mathematical conclusions were

derived. It is this mathematical structure which is, strictly speaking, the theory of games. To be useful to the social scientist, however, these conclusions have to be interpreted in terms of what goes on in the real world, and this has not always proved easy. For instance, the description and explanation of actual behaviour in terms of this theory has not so far proved very rewarding.

Essentially the theory is prescriptive and not descriptive. That is, it recommends a course of action, defined as "rational", and then goes on to describe the consequences of such behaviour. It is open to dispute as to whether the recommendations are, in fact, "rational" - there are various different possible definitions of rationality. The theory tells us what would happen if the particular behaviour rules recommended are followed, but it does not follow that these rules are accepted as rational or not. Thus the prognostic capabilities of game theory are inherently limited.

In Schelling's (1960:5) view, strategy is "essentially a prescriptive study - that is, the study of how to achieve various objectives in war - and, possibly for this reason, the theory of games has seemed appropriate and been popular amongst strategists". It should be clearly recognised, however, that, if it is used in strategy or in any other prescriptive sense, the theory only tells one how best to achieve a given set of goals. Whether those goals are good or appropriate or not is a question outside the scope of the theory as such, though it should not be beyond the concern of the theorist.

The development of the theory of games since the publication of Von Neumann and Morgenstern's study in 1944, has been slower than would have been expected. A depressing fact is that a book published in 1957 - Games and Decisions [78], by Duncan Luce and Howard Raiffa, is still a useful exposition of the theory at this time. There have, of course, been developments, but the book has by no means been superseded by the work done in the years succeeding its publication. In Nicholson's opinion (1970:52), the theory of games still "lacks some crucial requirements which would make it an effective tool for the analysis of human conflict behaviour".

However, there are important uses for the theory of games. There is little doubt that the formal statement of conflict relationships has clarified the nature of conflict. Further, there is a great deal of work which has clearly been inspired by the theory of games, such as bargaining and negotiation theory, and notably the work of Anatol Rapoport and Martin Shubik (1964). [79] Game theory has inspired much experimental work on how people actually behave in various gaming situations - the best-known being the 'zero sum game', the 'variable sum game' with its two well-known variants the 'Prisoner's Dilemma' and 'Chicken' games, and it has also suggested the description of conflict relationships and situations in game theory form. While an analysis of conflict according to the precepts of game theory leaves us little wiser on how people actually behave, the formulation of the problem in broader game theory terms is helpful. [80]

2.5.3 The theory of alliances

Both at the international and domestic level, alliances are formed to enable their members to achieve specific objectives. Since such alliances are disbanded when the objectives for which they have been established have been realised, they tend to be far less enduring than the political communities formed as nation states. Because of the historic importance of such alliances in the international system, and the widespread use of coalitions by political groupings intent upon attaining elective office, "such collaborative efforts have been the object of scholarly investigation especially by the 'political realists', notably Hans J. Morgenthau [81], Arnold Wolfers [82], Henry Kissinger [83], Naidu (1974) and Raymond Aron [84]" (Dougherty & Pfaltzgraff, 1971:301).

The theory of alliances has been suggested as an effective way to deal with inter-state conflict in the international system. While the structure of international alliances vary greatly, it is argued that alliances can effectively deal with specific dimensions of conflict, notably the threat or reality of armed conflict. There are also alliances, neither formal nor informal, which commit countries to helping others under certain specified situations such as military invasion, but which do not commit them to a more general support of each other. Obviously, the borderline between an agreement and an alliance "is a thin and wavering one". One could also define an alliance as existing when there are some sufficiently large number of explicit or implicit agreements (Nicholson, 1970:87) between two or more parties.

Alliances in the international system, can be classified into two main types - 'hierarchic' and 'egalitarian'. A completely hierarchic alliance is one in which the leader of the alliance virtually tells the rest what to do; in a completely egalitarian alliance there is no discernable leader. The Eastern European Alliance appears, during the late forties, to have closely resembled hierarchic alliance, though the Warsaw Pact is now somewhat looser. The Western Alliance, though in theory more egalitarian, nevertheless had a clear "leader" in the United States, whose influence on the behaviour of the alliance was much in evidence, despite considerable unease on the part of France. Pure instances of either type are inevitably hard to find except, perhaps, for short periods of time.

Two scholars in particular, George F. Liska and William Riker, have propounded theories of alliance behaviour. In their theoretical expositions, Liska and Riker share some important similarities. First, they agree that alliances or coalitions disband once they have achieved their objective(s), because they are formed essentially "against, and only derivatively for, someone or something" (Liska, 1962:12; Riker, 1962). Although a "sense of community" and value compatibility may reinforce alliances or coalitions, it seldom brings them into existence. In forming alliances to achieve some desired objective, decision-makers weigh the costs and rewards of alignment. A decision to join an alliance is based upon perception of rewards in excess of costs. Each country considers the marginal utility from alliance membership, as contrasted with unilateral action. Ultimately, the cohesiveness of an alliance "rests on the relationship between internal and

external pressures, bearing on the ratio of gains to liabilities for individual allies" (Liska, 1962:175). Once costs exceed rewards, the decision to realign is taken. However, Liska fails to distinguish between different kinds of costs such as social, political and economic costs.

In Liska's view, nations join alliances for security, stability and status considerations. On Liska's theory a primary prerequisite for alliance cohesion is the development of an "alliance ideology". The function of 'alliance ideology' is to provide a justification for alliance. Periodic consultation, especially between a leading member and its allies, both on procedural and substantive issues, contributes to the development and preservation of alliance ideology and thus alliance cohesion (Dougherty & Pfaltzgraff, 1971:302).

After victory, the size of the alliance or coalition must first be reduced if additional gains are to accrue to the remaining participants. Secondly, alliances or coalitions are crucial to the attainment of a balance of power. In Riker's framework, the formation of one coalition contributes to the formation of an "opposing coalition". When one coalition is on the verge of victory, neutral actors often join the weaker side, some members of the leading coalition must shift to the weaker of the two coalitions if the system is to regain equilibrium. In establishing his 'rules of equilibrium', Riker draws upon rules set out by Morton Kaplan in his balance of power system. Moreover, in relating alliances or coalitions to balance of power, Liska and Riker incorporate into their theories ideas found in realist international relations scholarship.

A most useful exposition of conflict dynamics between and within alliances is to be found in Johan Galtung's recent book titled "There are Alternatives: Four Roads to Peace and Security", published in 1984. [85] In this book, Galtung (1984:55-59), deals with conflict dynamics between and within alliances with reference to values and interests, and how these manifest in inter-party and intra-party conflicts between East and West, and within East and West. Recently, David Singer and his associates [86] examined themes such as "capability distribution", "behavioural indicators" and their relevance for alliance formation (J David Singer and Associates Explaining War - Selected Papers (1979)).

While a discussion of the internal structure and dynamic of alliances or coalitions falls outside the scope of this study, the theory of alliance formation and its relation to conflict in the international system, have hopefully contributed to a clearer understanding of their relevance.

2.5.4 The theory of arms races

The concept 'arms race' is used to describe a situation where two or more countries increase their armaments in response to increases in the other country's level of armament, because of the threat they believe to be involved. This is a process in which the actions of one country cause a reaction in another, which induces the first country to extend the scale of its actions, and so on (Kahn, 1960 :370).

Arms races have constantly occupied the minds of scholars that are interested in the problems of peace and war. The reasons

for this are not hard to find. If two states continuously increase their armaments, the likelihood of conflict and war would seem to increase (Richardson, 1960; Kahn, 1960:370-377). That arms races are a real phenomenon is not just a figment of the pacifists' imagination is patently obvious. One classic example is that of the naval race between Britain and Germany in the period before the First World War. Britain and Germany were enlarging their fleets by building, among other things, the large Dreadnoughts; and the explicit motivation in the case of both countries was the naval build-up of the other power. More recently, the Soviet Union and the United States have been increasing their nuclear armaments and accompanying delivery systems in response to the armaments of the other. There have been many more cases.

Not surprisingly, there has been renewed interest in the theory of arms races in the fifties and sixties, with the development of more sophisticated (and deadly) nuclear weapons. But, what is the function of a theory of arms races? The basic idea is to be able to specify the relationship between the armaments programme of two competing states, and the propensity for armed conflict between them. It is also hoped that such an analysis will provide some insights into the causes of arms races as well as some understanding of when and how armaments races stop.

The more prominent scholars in this field include, amongst others, Richardson (1960) [87]; Kahn (1960 and 1962) [88], and Bull (1961). [89] However, it should be emphasised that the theory of arms races is not, in itself, a theory of the cause of war. Wars do not start simply because of the mutual hostility engendered by an arms build-up. What is necessary to connect the two is an explicit

theory which relates levels of arms to the likelihood of war. In principle, this can be built into the theory of the arms race to give a more comprehensive picture of the whole process.

There are various arguments which relate the quantity of arms to the likelihood of war. Some of these emphasize the destabilising effects of arms, and others argue that, under certain conditions, arms have a stabilising effect. Stated in their extreme forms, there is the one view which Richardson seems to support by implication : that the likelihood of war increases the more arms there are. The concern here is with the total quantity of arms held by both parties, the distribution between them being seen as of minor significance. The opposite extreme is where the over-all level of arms is thought to be of no real significance, what matters being the balance between the two parties involved. In this case, if there is a balance of terror (it is important to differentiate this from a balance of power, which is a situation where there are several states which can switch alliances), then there is little likelihood of war, as it would be equally costly to both sides.

Few scholars hold either of these two positions in the extreme forms stated. "One can therefore quite easily hold a view which combines elements of both, arguing that the probability of war increases if an imbalance develops between the two contending parties, that this is aggravated if the level of arms is high and, further, that, even if a balance exists, the probability of war increases as this balance moves up to higher and higher levels" (Nicholson, 1970:134).

While the theory of arms races has not gained widespread

acceptance, it is useful in the sense of providing some insight into the dynamic of arms build-up. However, for a fuller understanding of the nature of arms races, and especially of their causes and prevention, it has to be combined with other approaches such as third-party intervention and negotiation theories.

2.5.5 Experimental approaches

The experiments which have been conducted and which are of interest to the scholar of the behaviour of states fall broadly into two groups which lie at opposite ends of the spectrum of complexity. On the one hand, there are the simulations where a situation is set up which attempts to approximate as closely as possible the international decision-making environment.

At the other extreme of the experimental spectrum are a variety of games such as 'war games', where the choices available to the players are more constrained. These 'games' make no pretence of reproducing real situations, the aim being to gain an understanding of some aspects of behaviour in the hope that the knowledge may be transferable to more complex situations.

Simulation is different from game theory and gaming, although related to them. Whereas game theory seeks the 'optimum mathematically rational strategy' for playing a game (purely as a game, with no reference to the "real world"), simulation deals with a "let's pretend" situation (Dougherty & Pfaltzgraff, 1971:369). A simulation experiment may be defined as a special kind of game designed not merely for the sake of "playing a game" but rather "for the purpose of demonstrating a valid observation about actual social processes through the unfolding of an artificially

constructed yet dynamic model. Thus, simulation techniques are essentially laboratory techniques which permit the study of "replicated human behaviour". Through the application of these techniques the researcher attempts to learn something significant and useful about the complexities of human behaviour "out there", which he cannot control, by creating "in here" a more simplified version of that phenomenon which he can control and which is in some way analogous or isomorphic (Snyder, 1963:2-5). Social scientists have long experienced that it is virtually impossible to obtain from the real world certain kinds of data needed to verify their hypotheses about conflict behaviour. The experimental method of simulation represents a tentative effort to compensate for some of these data deficiencies (Guetzkow et al., 1963).

Recently simulation techniques have found many uses. War games and other exercises in strategic analysis have a long history. Every strategic planner has some sort of model or "simulation" in mind when he attempts to forecast the outcome of specific developments. The notion of a "scenario" to describe the situation at the outset of a game was always implicit in military gaming. Formalised political-military gaming with government personnel as participants made its appearance in the period between the two world wars, and became quite common after 1945 in the work of the Rand Corporation and other institutes.

Simulation may assume a variety of forms, depending upon the political knowledge-level and experience of the participants; the total resources available, including personnel, physical facilities and administrative support; and the purpose intended to be served by the experiment. Simulation experiments in the field of

international relations and conflict research are commonly designed with a view toward one or more of the following objectives :

"1) teaching and training of students; 2) advancing the policy sciences and clarifying policy alternatives through the interaction of professional practitioners; 3) promoting theoretical research and analysis through the testing of social science hypotheses. It seems important to keep distinct these three functions of "gaming", at least conceptually" (Dougherty & Pfaltzgraff, 1971:37).

Despite its considerable limitations, simulation exercises can throw light on two aspects relevant to conflict resolution. First, the technique can provide a pattern of decisions and events, the "state" being presented as the behavioural unit. [90] Secondly, it is a technique for studying the various changes in perception which occur, particularly in conflict situations. In the experimental setting, the perceptual variables can be studied much more closely than is possible in real conflict situations, where the method of content analysis, though valuable, is about the only formalise method available (Nicholson, 1970:156).

2.5.6 Bargaining and third-party intervention

Thomas C. Schelling of Harvard University although widely regarded as a leading game theorist, soon began to shift his intellectual focus to bargaining. "In Schelling's work we find a combination of the social-psychological and the logical-strategic approaches to the subject of human conflict. In Schelling's model, conflict is seen not exclusively as the opposition of hostile forces but rather as a more complex and delicate phenomenon in which antagonism and cooperation subtly interact in the adversary relationship"

(Nicholson, 1970:157). His theory seeks "to make use of game theory, organization and communication theory, and theory of evidence, choice and collective decision". This strategic theory, according to Schelling (1963:15):

"Takes conflict for granted, but also assumes common interest between the adversaries; it assumes a "rational" value-maximizing mode of behavior; and it focuses on the fact that each participant's "best" choice of action depends on what he expects the other to do, and that "strategic behavior is concerned with influencing another's choice by working on his expectation of how one's own behavior is related to his."

Schelling, then, is primarily interested in such issues as the 'conduct of negotiations', the maintenance of 'credible deterrence', the making of threats and promises, 'bluffing', 'double-crossing', the waging of limited conflict, and the formulation of formal or tacit arms control policies. His writing reflects a conviction that in most international strategic situations the notion of the zero-sum game is simply irrelevant. Indeed, his "theory of interdependent decisions", as he prefers to call it, is addressed less to the application than to the threat of violence as a means of influencing another party's behaviour.

While Schelling is very much interested in what constitutes 'rational behaviour' between two parties to a conflict, he shies away from the idea that rationality can be accurately quantified. Thus, instead of looking for the "minimax solution" to conflict situations, Schelling is more interested in what has been termed

"motivational dialectics" (Dougherty & Pfaltzgraff, 1971:365). He goes so far as to suggest that even though rationality is a desirable commodity, it is not always and under all circumstances desirable to appear rational.

Schelling (1963:18-19), focuses particularly upon what he terms "the theory of precarious partnership or ...incomplete antagonism". This implies a situation in which parties to a conflict, despite their strategic opposition to each other, perceive some minimum mutual interest, even if this amounts to no more than the avoidance of mutual destruction.

Schelling contends that the resolution of conflict is not only theoretically possible but also historically actual. Recent cases in point include the mutual abstention from the use of gas weaponry in World War II and the various restrictions imposed upon the conduct of the Korean War with respect to geographical boundaries. Schelling also suggests that it may be possible to make arrangements prior to the outbreak of conflict which increase the likelihood that limits could be observed once hostilities are under way. This involves keeping channels of communication open, clarifying in advance the 'authority' and 'authenticity' of messages calculated to reduce the pressures for uncontrollable escalation, and 'identifying parties who might plausibly act as intermediaries'. But he concedes that there are certain exigencies in the strategy of threats, bluffs and deterrents which may make one or both parties reluctant to enter into such contingency plans as might reduce the risk of destructive conflict.

The major objective in bargaining, Schelling reiterates, is for each party to make his commitments, threats and promises

credible to the other party, so that the latter cannot conclude that the former is 'bluffing'. In the opinion of Dougherty & Pfaltzgraff (1971:368-369), it is the rich variety of "subtle signalling problems associated with this type of political game that makes The Strategy of Conflict one of the most interesting and readable works in international relations theory."

The development of conflict research in general, and bargaining theory in particular, benefited greatly from two related developments. The first, which originated in the United States, centred around the Journal of Conflict Resolution at the University of Michigan. The pioneers in this period were Kenneth Boulding, Anatol Rapoport, David Singer and Lewis F. Richardson. The second wave came from the International Peace Research Institute in Oslo, headed by Johan Galtung. The Journal of Peace Research was carried forward by this wave. During the second wave, more researchers became active, while more journals and several peace research institutes were established (Höglund & Ulrich, 1972:78).

Several influential works have been published that have shaped the development of conflict research. Most notably, International Conflict and the Behavioral Sciences [91], edited by Roger Fisher (1964); International Behavior [92], edited by Herbert C. Kelman (1965); The Nature of Human Conflict [93], by Elton B. McNeil (1965), and Human Behavior and International Politics [94], edited by David Singer (1965). All these sources have played a role in the development of a common frame of reference.

Starting with a relatively restricted study of conflict behaviour, conflict research has gradually accepted the insight that the processes of social conflict are intimately linked to and

influenced by the nature of the social systems themselves, their structure and their transformation.

Various scholars followed on the pioneering work of Schelling and Lewis Richardson. Morton Deutsch for instance, provided a useful overview of conflict resolution techniques, including bargaining and third-party intervention in his The Resolution of Conflict - Constructive and Destructive Processes [95], published in 1973. On negotiation theory and third-party intervention a variety of useful texts appeared. What follows is a short, and incomplete, list of some of the better-known sources : How Nations Negotiate [96], by Ikle (1964); Peaceful Settlement of Disputes: Ideas and proposals for research [97], by Bailey (1971); Conflict and Communication - The Use of Controlled Communication in International Relations [98], by Burton (1969); The Intermediaries - Third Parties in International Crises [99], by Oran Young (1967); Conflict and Defense [100], by Kenneth Boulding (1962); Interpersonal Peacekeeping: Confrontations and Third-Party Consultation [101], by Walton (1969); Basic Negotiating Strategy - International Conflict for Beginners [102], by Fisher (1971); Getting to Yes Negotiating Agreement without giving In [103] by Fisher and Ury (1982); The Negotiations Process: Theories and Applications [104], by Zartman (1978); The Practical Negotiator [105], by Zartman and Berman (1982), and the concise, but eminently useful, Peacemaking and the Consultant's Role [106] by Mitchell (1981).

From the above incomplete list, it is clear that conflict research has entered a much more complex phase, characterised by a variety of special applications. In the fields of industrial

relations and riot control, for instance, ideas from bargaining and negotiation theory find specific application.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter attempted to sketch the evolution of conflict research in broad outline in terms of four dominant perspectives, namely : "Conflict in psychological perspective"; "Conflict in sociological perspective"; "Conflict in philosophical perspective", and "Conflict in international relations". From the above it is clear that conflict research is characterised by eclectism and interdisciplinary ventures.

Conflict research came into its own in the 1950s in the shadow of the Cold War, and a Cold War perspective has characterised its first phases of development. Especially in the discipline of international relations, there has been a concentration on military structure and action, on arms races, disarmament negotiations, alliance formation and weapons management.

The trauma of the Vietnam experience produced altered and new perspectives within conflict research. Attention has increasingly been focused on inequalities and dissimilarities in the structure of world society. From research on prejudice, aggression, stereotyping, perception, and distortion of information, attention has shifted to studies of alienation, apathy, and dependence. An important consequence of this shift in focus is the search for methods of reducing inequalities between social groups in conflict, or systems change and social development (Höglund & Ulrich, 1972:13-36).

Two important new sets of questions are being posed to conflict research as a result of this changing perspective. First, if the goal of conflict research is the development of techniques of conflict control, conflict management, conflict resolution and social integration, toward what ends should these techniques be used? Conflict control for what reasons? Conflict resolution in whose interests? Integration around what - or whose - system of values?

Secondly, is the conflict studied functional or dysfunctional for the participants? What will be the consequences of controlling a given conflict? In any given situation, is conflict increasing or decreasing the rate of social change and development? Under what conditions does - or can - conflict contribute to 'integrative' as well as 'disintegrative' results?

It has become increasingly clear that when conflict is dysfunctional, it is pursued as an end in itself. If conflict research is confined to the study of conflict without regard to its larger socio-political context, then this research itself may be contributing to the maintenance of such dysfunctional tendencies. In order to be relevant, conflict researchers must view conflict in its relationships to broader processes of development and change of social systems.

Against the backdrop of this wider historical and intellectual canvas, the following chapter will address the conceptual intricacies and ambiguities associated with the concept of "conflict" itself. Various typologies of conflict will also be presented.

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CHAPTER 3CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS3.1 Introduction - some theoretical considerations

The concern of this chapter is to clarify key concepts used in this study. These are: "conflict", "conflict resolution", "conflict settlement", "conflict accommodation", "conflict management", and "conflict structure". The chapter concludes with a typology of various types of conflict.

The usage of concepts in the social sciences is problematic, and is subject to the practice and preferences of different schools of thought, subject fields, methodologies and theoretical orientations. Conceptual imprecision and ambiguity, constitutes an important obstacle to the improvement of communication among social scientists, and hence, "the growth of an efficient network for social science information" (Riggs, 1981:13).

The entire problem of conceptual clarity, lead the International Political Science Association (IPSA), to establish a research 'Committee on Conceptual and Terminological Analysis' (COCTA) within IPSA, with Giovanni Sartori as its chairman and Fred W. Riggs as its secretary. This committee, established in 1970, has met on several occasions (for example in Montreal, Canada, in 1973) to discuss the whole problem of the definition and analysis of concepts in the social sciences. Various working papers were later published in a book entitled "Tower of Babel: On the Definition and Analysis of Concepts in the Social Sciences" [1], edited by Sartori, Riggs, and Henry Teune.

This was followed by a "Conference on Conceptual and

Terminological Analysis in the Social Sciences" held in Bielefeld, West Germany in 1981. The proceedings of this conference has been edited and published by Fred W. Riggs, under the title of The Conta Conference. [2]

If the assertion is correct that there is much conceptual ambiguity in the social sciences, then an analysis of the concept of "conflict" and related concepts such as "conflict resolution" and "conflict structure" as these appear in contemporary political science and international relations literature would serve two useful purposes. First, it might tell us something about the phenomenon of conflict and so deepen our understanding of a dimension central to political life, and secondly, it might tell us something about the study of politics, as it is and as it should be, and thereby help us enlarge our capacity to understand other aspects of political life as well.

3.2 Conflict - a conceptual clarification

There is widespread agreement amongst social scientists that one of the most relevant aspects of a theory is its key concepts - "those which incorporate the distinctions in terms of which its descriptions and explanations are framed and upon which its conclusions ultimately rest". Nardin (1971:6), comments as follows:-

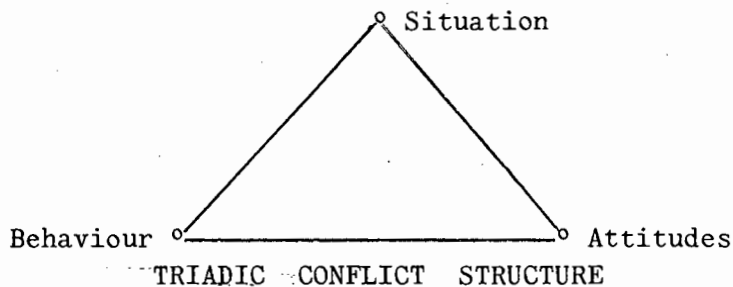
"It is these concepts which define reality by delimiting and classifying experience, which determine what questions can be asked, hence answered, about this experience, and which may entail in diverse ways a variety of evaluative commitments with implications for both scientific and political practice".

Considerable ambiguity surrounds the concept of "conflict". In popular use it is often taken to mean some dispute in which two or more parties are using violence in a destructive fashion as a means of winning. It is also popularly assumed that the term "conflict" refers to actual behaviour, which normally involves either coercion or violence or both. Such behaviour is seen as aimed at preventing the other party or parties from threatening or realising one's own objectives and value preferences. Its absence is taken to be a sign of peaceful co-existence, or "at peace" (Mitchell, 1981a:15). Underpinning this popular notion of conflict is the idea that conflict implies "breakdown" or some kind of "pathology", and that it invariably involves violence, and hence is seen as destructive and "negative".

Concentrating solely upon the behavioural manifestations of conflict is rather limited, and leads to neglect of other dimensions. Conceptually, understanding of the dynamics of conflict, can be greatly facilitated by drawing a distinction between three inter-related dimensions. These are:

- (i) a conflict situation
- (ii) conflict behaviour
- (iii) conflict attitudes and perceptions.

Following Galtung (1969) the above distinctions can be presented as a triadic conflict structure.



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It needs to be emphasised that these three structural dimensions of conflict may be analytically separated but that, in any real world of conflict, all three are intimately related with each other in various ways. Each of these three dimensions, will now be briefly outlined.

Initially, following Mitchell, (1981a:17), a situation of conflict will be defined as:-

"Any situation in which two or more social entities or 'parties' (however defined or structured) perceive that they possess mutually incompatible goals" (Mitchell, 1981a:17).

The term "goals" refers to consciously desired or perceived future outcomes, conditions or "end states", which often have intrinsic (but different) value for members of particular parties, but which also bring with them increased benefits or costs for party members. The importance of goals or values, underpins a useful distinction between conflict of interest or value and conflicts of attribution or means. This distinction will be further explored in the section that deals with "Types of conflict".

Goal incompatibility in a situation of conflict, may arise from different sources. On Mitchell's analysis, (1981a and b), three such sources are particularly important. These are:-

- (i) "Tension(s) between social structure and social values;
- (ii) Perceptions of scarcity with reference to both material and positional goods; [3] and
- (iii) resource scarcity, which refers to the physical limitations of the amount of material goods at any one point in time."

Goals can be of two basic types, namely positive goals, such as increased wealth, access to material resources, security and independence, and negative goals, such as the avoidance of an undesirable state of affairs, or the extermination of one's opposition.

Conflict attitudes and perceptions refer to the psychological and perceptual dimensions or conditions that accompany (and often exacerbate) both conflict situations and resultant conflict behaviour (Mitchell, 1981a:25). The "psychology of conflict" comprises both emotive and cognitive processes such as stereotyping or refusal to accept non-conforming information.

Following Burton (1969:11), this study operates on the assumption that the psychological elements of conflict should best be regarded as an exacerbating factor, rather than a prime source of conflict. [4] This has the important implication for the resolution of conflict, that "the mere rectification of perceptions alone will not necessitate in the resolution of the conflict". In each case the underlying sources of the conflict have to be understood and addressed.

The dimension of conflict behaviour, refers to the actual or manifest behaviour of the opposing parties in their attempts to achieve incompatible goals. Conflict behaviour may nominally be defined as:

"Actions undertaken by one party in any situation of conflict aimed at the opposing party with the intention of making that opponent abandon or modify its goals"
(Mitchell, 1981a:29).

This working definition raises a number of problems. Among these, the immediate problem of interpreting the intentions and motivations of the behaving party.

From the above brief exposition, it becomes clear that conflict has three inter-related dimensions, namely:

- (i) A situation of incompatible goals, values, and/or interests;
- (ii) A range of "psychological conditions" experienced by the parties involved; and
- (iii) A set of related behaviours employed to realise the disputed goals and interests.

The above exposition of conflict, however, does not clarify the essential properties of conflict as a basic kind of social and interactional phenomenon. These properties may be itemised as follows:

- (1) At least two parties are involved. However, in the case of social conflict, normally more than two parties are involved.
- (2) Conflictful relationships arise from either "position scarcity or resource scarcity" or both.
- (3) Conflictful relationships are designed to destroy, injure, thwart or control another party or parties.
- (4) "The key is the intent of action and the object of action. This element of intent distinguishes conflict from competition". [5]
- (5) A conflictful relationship is one in which a party or parties can only gain (relatively) at the other's expense. Gain implies loss of some kind, although not necessarily in a zero-sum fashion.

- (6) Conflictful relationships imply interactions among parties in which actions and interactions are mutually opposed.
- (7) Conflictful relationships always involve attempts to gain control of scarce resources and positions to influence behaviour in certain desired or perceived directions.
- (8) Conflict does not imply "breakdown", it is a social relationship with implications for all involved. These implications are basically of three kinds, namely:
- (a) costs
 - (b) disfunctional/destructive
 - (c) constructive/functional.

This last observation is an important one, because it implies that conflict is not only a destructive relationship, but that it can be both constructive and "functional" in certain situations and contexts (Coser, 1956:3, and Coser, 1961:347-353).

The above exposition of the essential properties of conflict as a social relationship, based on the work of Mack and Snyder (1957:212-248), however, should be complemented with a discussion of "conflict" as a basic social relationship, and contrasted with "co-operation" and "isolation" as two other basic types.

While bearing in mind the mixed nature of social relationships, three such "ideal" types, may be suggested. These are "conflict", "isolation" and "co-operation" (Mitchell, 1981a:24). Table 1 lists these three basic ideal types.

TABLE 1 : SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS : BASIC TYPES

Pure situation	Goals	Characteristic behaviour	Characteristic inter-party attitudes	Characteristic relationship
Co-operation	<u>Congruent:</u> Identical, interdependent or complementary	Via consultation; concerted, or accommodation; benefit-conferring	Friendly	Alignment
Conflict	<u>Incompatible:</u> (i) in different order or importance (ii) Contradictory; mutually exclusive	Solely at own behest; blocking, resistant, interfering; cost imposing	Hostile	Enmity
Isolation	<u>Independent:</u> No inter-active effects; goals can be held simultaneously as none affects the other	None directed towards the other party	Ignorant or non-existent	None

Table 1 emphasises the central role of a party's goals in defining what sort of relationship exists between it and another party or, more correctly, what degree of conflict characterises the inter-party relationship. As previously indicated, these basic social relationships hardly occur in their "pure" form in the real world. Social relationships are by nature mixed, and hence, contains elements of all three of these basic types.

In our presentation of these three basic social relationships, the order amongst them has been changed. In Mitchell's original presentation (1981a:24), "conflict" is placed first. This is followed by "co-operation" and "isolation". However, we are of the opinion that, logically speaking, "Conflict" needs to be placed between "co-operation" and "isolation", because it provides the dialectic between these two patterns of behaviour.

Table 1 is useful, because it highlights some of the essential properties of conflict as a social relationship and contrasts these with both "co-operation" and "Isolation" as two other basic types.

3.3 Conflict - a synthesis

Based on the above exploratory discussion, the concept of conflict, may nominally be defined as follows:-

Conflict is a social relationship among parties in which actions and interactions are mutually opposed, and which implies a structure with situational, behavioural and attitudinal dimensions.

Pettman (1975:235-236) following Fink (1968:414), prefers a broad definition of conflict, which includes:

..."any social situation or process in which two or more social entities are linked by at least one form of antagonistic interaction. This emphasises that while antagonism...is the common element in all conflicts, there are a number of different kinds of psychological antagonisms (e.g. incompatible goals, mutually exclusive interests, emotional hostility, factual or value dissensus, traditional enmities, etc.) and a number of different kinds of antagonistic interaction (ranging from the most direct, violent and unregulated struggle to the most subtle, indirect, and highly regulated forms of mutual interference), none of which is necessarily present in all instances of conflict."

This nominal conceptualisation of conflict has various important implications. The following may be regarded as of special importance, namely:

- (1) For a social relationship to exist at least two or more parties (however defined) are needed. Thus, conflict is an interactional phenomenon.
- (2) The goals guiding such social relationship(s) are incompatible in two basic senses. First, they are in different order of priority and importance, and secondly, they are either contradictory or mutually exclusive.
- (3) As a social relationship, conflict may manifest itself at different levels of interaction. This implies, as Burton reminds us, that resolution at one level does not presuppose resolution at every level of interaction. Clearly, this dimension has important implications for conflict analysis and resolution.
- (4) Conflict displays an underlying structure which consists of three inter-related dimensions, namely a situation of conflict, conflict behaviour and conflict attitudes and perceptions.

Depending upon the structure of conflict, various types of conflict may be distinguished. These will be discussed, after an attempt at clarification of the remaining key concepts used in this study. These concepts are: "Conflict resolution", "conflict settlement", "conflict accommodation", "conflict management" and "conflict structure". Each of these concepts will now be briefly clarified.

3.4 Conflict resolution/termination

For the purposes of this study, the concept "conflict resolution", or termination "denotes a process whereby the sources of the conflict relationship are removed, rather than the behavioural or attitudinal components being altered. It implies an outcome which benefits both parties" (Burton, 1969:233-235).

Conflict resolution or termination, to use Mitchell's (1981a) phrase, is a far more complex and comprehensive process than mere conflict settlement which is based on the notion of mutual compromise. It requires theoretical and practical knowledge and understanding of the structure and dynamics of conflict.

Conflict resolution implies a process whereby the sources of a specific conflict relationship are addressed and ultimately removed. This implies that the underlying causes or sources of conflict need to be clearly identified and understood by the parties involved in the conflict. The trend toward growing interdependence in the world, implies that the bases or sources of conflict are to be found at different levels of interaction. Moreover, that "there are different kinds of disputes to be found within one conflict relationship" (Burton, 1969:11). The implication of this is that conflict has to be resolved at different levels of interaction and may demand the application of different techniques to do so.

3.5 Conflict settlement

Following Mitchell (1981a:253), "conflict settlement" will be taken to imply some compromise solution derived at by "splitting the differences" between conflicting parties. A conflict may thus be "settled" without being necessarily "resolved". Conflict settlement

is a less complex and comprehensive process than conflict resolution, and implies that the underlying sources or causes of a conflict may be unaffected by it. The majority of conflicts in the world are "settled" as distinct from "resolved".

3.6 Conflict accommodation

The usage of the concept of "conflict accommodation" is problematic. Some authors like Burton (1969 and 1972) and Mitchell (1981a and 1981b), use it interchangeably with the concept "conflict settlement". The more normal usage, however, relates to the institutional accommodation of conflict by the state or agency of the state. Hence, one can refer to the accommodation of conflict in terms of a particular policy or institutional arrangements. "Conflict accommodation" presupposes some institutional or policy response to conflict.

3.7 Conflict management

Political systems are conditioned by a variety of constraints found in both social and physical environments. Political elites must manage these environments and must be responsive to pressures from them. As argued above, all political and social systems are characterized by both value and position scarcity. Resource scarcity can be managed by successful manipulation of the physical environment. Position scarcity can be managed by successful manipulation of the social environment. The essence of conflict management, according to Dennis Pirages (1976:13) is an attempt by political elites "to formulate policies through which optimal manipulation of these environments may take place and conflict can thus be avoided".

Conflict management is a process that aims at both the regulation of conflict, and at its avoidance. There are many different perspectives from which analysis of political conflict management can begin. One perspective emphasises politics as a "cooperative venture" involving the coordination of a division of labour within society. This perspective is common amongst consensus sociologists such as Talcott Parsons, and functionalists such as Gabriel Almond (Himes, 1980:15).

Within democratic discourse, political leaders seek to minimize conflict, largely by including as many divergent views as possible within the system of political participation. While "minimization" of conflict is considered to be a worthy end, this does not imply that the elimination of all forms of conflict is possible or desirable.

Dennis Pirages (1976:15), comments:

"Conflict management, in contrast with conflict minimization or elimination, is an active process undertaken by all political incumbents in seeking to maintain political stability and themselves in power."

One obvious democratic strategy of conflict management is responsiveness to conflicting citizen demands and interests. Conflict management also involves the substitution of more remote issues for those that are in the public eye and that are potentially more pressing. Another tactic that has been used by ruling political elites is the substitution of conflicts with external intervention when internal problems become unmanageable or politically embarrassing.

3.8 Conflict structure

The concept of conflict structure refers to the interactions among three inter-related dimensions, namely a conflict situation, conflict behaviour, and conflict attitudes and perceptions. A situation of conflict will be defined as - "Any situation in which two or more social entities or "parties" (however defined or structured) perceive that they possess mutually incompatible goals" (Mitchell, 1981a:17).

Conflict attitudes and perceptions refer to the psychological and perceptual environments or conditions that accompany (and often exacerbate) both conflict situations and resultant conflict behaviour. Conflict behaviour refers to actions undertaken by one party in any situation of conflict aimed at the opposing party with the intention of making the opposing party abandon or modify its goals.

Taken together, these three inter-related dimensions constitute the structure of a conflict.

3.9 Conflict : a typology

Having clarified our key concepts, a typology of various types of conflict is offered. Normally scholars identify the following types of conflict on the grounds of the parties, issues, and objectives of the participants involved. However, as Rapoport (1960) reminds us, there is no agreed classification for conflict itself.

- (a) Conflict within persons or intraparty conflict. In this type of conflict the actions and interactions within a person or party are mutually opposed or incompatible.

- (b) Conflict between persons or parties or interparty conflict. In this type of conflict the actions and interactions between two or more parties or persons are mutually opposed. The majority of conflicts are of this type.
- (c) Conflict between groups or inter-group or communal conflict (Mack and Snyder, 1957:212-248). Inter-group or communal conflict refers to conflict where groups or communities (however defined) are the main actors in a conflict relationship. Such conflict revolves around divergent goals, interests, and values between groups or communities.
- (d) Realistic versus non-realistic conflict - "the former involves conflict between opposed means and ends, the latter implies a need for tension to be released and stems from deflected hostility, historical tradition, from ignorance or error" (Coser, 1956:49).
- (e) Coser (1956:49 and 1972:58), distinguishes between "basic cleavage conflict", which revolves round the very nature and consensual framework within which parties have to operate, and conflict over means and subordinate ends within such a framework.
- (f) Institutionalised conflict, which denotes conflict within a body of rules, (e.g. organised labour within an institutional framework), versus non-institutional conflict such as war and insurgency (Zimmermann, 1977:5,8).
- (g) Ideological conflict, which implies conflict over conceptions of the desirable, over prescriptive norms, and beliefs which do or should govern particular behavioural patterns (Kluckhohn, 1951:391).

- (h) Cultural conflict, which derives from differences in life-styles and values. "However, this conception is so broad that it needs to be broken down into component elements such as biological, psychobiological, ethnic and so forth to be useful as an analytical category" (Mack and Snyder, 1972: 8-9).
- (i) Structural violence as defined by Galtung (1969:168), in terms of the difference between "the potential and the actual", between what could have been and what is. In this notion of conflict, structural factors make it impossible for people to realise their full potential. People or groups subjected to state discrimination for instance, may be considered victims of "structural violence".
- (j) Content conflict, where the cause of conflict is a matter of the distribution of resources, be they material, political, symbolic or economic.
- (k) Ego conflict, where conflict between political leaders is overriding other conflicts in society.
- (l) Pseudo conflict, where there is no real cause for or no real conflict.
- (m) Exogamous and endogamous conflict. In the case of the former the sources of the conflict are to be found external or outside a specific grouping or association. For example in the case of cross-border conflict. In the case of the latter - endogamous conflict - it originates within a particular party or association. Examples include ethnic and class conflict (Dahrendorf, 1958:171).

- (n) Latent versus manifest conflict. These two notions constitute points on a conflict continuum. In the case of the former (latent) conflict, is transformed into manifest conflict by a process of conflict group formation. In the case of the latter, non-violent manifest conflict is transformed into violent manifest conflict (de Kock, 1984:259).

Clearly, this is not an exhaustive typology of conflict. While these distinctions are analytically useful and necessary, in practice different types of conflict are often mutually reinforcing.

3.10 Conclusion

The concept "conflict" denotes a social relationship between two or more parties. The interaction and relations between parties can display various characteristics. For example they can be of a direct or an indirect nature. They can display differences in intensity and commitment. They can be positive, in the sense of fulfilling the mutual aspirations and value expectations of the parties. Finally, they can be acrimonious; destructive, and antagonistic.

As a relational phenomenon, conflict may be presented on a continuum. If one examines the interactions between two or more parties on such a continuum, then the following differences will become apparent:

THE CONFLICT CONTINUUM

Competitative Conflict

- a) Indirect negative interaction
- b) Mutual expectations are fulfilled by adherence to the rules of the game
- c) Low level of animosity
- d) Latent violence
- d) Regulated conflict
- f) Non-violent conflict
- g) Positive conflict

Violent Conflict

- a) Direct negative interaction
- b) Mutual expectations remain unfulfilled - no agreement on rules is possible
- c) Extreme animosity
- d) Manifest violence
- e) Unregulated conflict
- f) Violent conflict
- g) Negative conflict

(de Kock, 1984:266)

The difference between competition and conflict becomes clear in terms of a useful distinction proposed by Mack and Snyder (1957:217). Competition involves striving for scarce resources according to an agreed set of rules governing the behaviour of the competitors. Conflict occurs when competitors disregard rules or when they seek to destroy each other in their quest for scarce resources satisfaction. However, a clear distinction between competition and conflict cannot easily be upheld in the real world, hence the term "competitative conflict".

Having dealt with some conceptual issues, the following chapter will attempt an exploratory analysis of the various workshops designed to resolve conflict in its different manifestations and dimensions.

Endnotes to Chapter 3

1. Sartori, Giovanni, Riggs, Fred W., and Henry Teune. Tower of Babel - On the Definition and Analysis of Concepts in the Social Sciences, International Studies Association, occasional papers, no. 6, 1975.
2. Riggs, F.W. The Conta Conference - Proceedings of the Conference on Conceptual and Terminological Analysis in the Social Sciences, Indeks Verlag, Frankfurt, 1982.
3. Fred Hirsch has shown that circumstances of scarcity may arise over material goods (oil wells, motor cars), and positional goods (roles as managers, permanent members of the UN Security Council), the latter being scarce in some absolute and final sense. For a discussion of these two concepts, see Hirsch, F., Social Limits to Growth, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1977.
4. In each case, the real sources of a conflict have to be clearly analysed and removed for resolution to take place.
5. The difference between conflict and competition can be clearly illustrated with reference to a rugby match. For as long as the players play according to the rules, we have competition. The minute, however, when one or more of the players ignore the rules, we have conflict.

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CHAPTER 4

THE BASIC MODEL - A TENTATIVE EXPLORATION

4.1 Introduction

In the analysis of interstate conflict, processes is central to much of international relations scholarship. Three phases of conflict processes are frequently identified [1], namely:-

- (a) The "pre-conflict" phase, which refers to the sequence of events leading up to the outbreak of hostilities [2];
- (b) the "actual conflict" phase : the outbreak and subsequent events of the conflict itself; and
- (c) the "post-conflict" phase, which refers to an overt attempt to end hostilities and culminating in a resolution of the conflict. [3]

Predominantly, the emphasis of international relations scholars has been on the first two phases - the causes or sources of conflict (e.g. the "Correlates of war") and the conflict behaviour of states and nations. Relatively little attention has been directed toward models for the termination and prevention of conflict. Hill (1972:110), comments:

"This is somewhat surprising since, even if one leaves aside the debate regarding the desirability of achieving an absence of conflict [4], it is highly unlikely that such a state of affairs will ever be achieved. Therefore, a strong case can be made for the scientific analysis of conflict, and especially for the processes by which conflicts can be controlled and terminated."

Much of the literature on conflict resolution and, in particular, the role of third party intervention in conflict

processes to bring about such a resolution, has been from a historical or legalistic perspective, providing descriptions of case studies of particular conflicts, often overemphasising their uniqueness and presenting them as sui generis. Frequently, it is asserted that the success (or lack of success) of third-party intervention bringing about a resolution was due primarily to the "special skills" and "expertise" of the third party involved. "Diplomats and mediators are born, not made" encapsulates this popular assumption. Much of the work in this area is concerned with the role of the United Nations in peace-keeping activities. Other more traditional methods of third-party intervention would focus upon the International Court of Justice, negotiation and arbitration by the League of Nations, and the use of "neutral" parties to mediate disputes between conflicting parties. [5]

In the latter part of the 1960s, however, a new approach to an analysis of conflict processes and the resolution of conflict was developed : the problem-solving workshop. [6] Barbara Hill (1982:111), comments:

"The workshop was designed to serve two functions : (1) to provide conflict researchers with the opportunity to investigate the dynamics of an ongoing international conflict; and (2) to provide a setting in which the parties to the conflict could meet and learn techniques that would enable them to resolve eventually the conflict peacefully".

The development of this approach arose from a belief that more conventional methods of third-party intervention, based upon legal and diplomatic approaches, were not particularly successful in resolving conflict. More specifically, it was argued that

conventional techniques relied upon "coercive methods," resulting in solutions based on "compromise" and "imposed by authority," whereas "social science research had suggested that these traditional methods were not necessarily the most effective at reducing violence and conflict" (Burton, 1972a:5-6). Whereas traditional approaches treated conflicts as contests to be won - the new approach was to examine conflicts as problems to be solved, to explore more 'integrative solutions' where both sides might "win". [7] Within this new approach "an effort was made to apply concepts developed in social-psychological literature and analyses of small group behaviour and insights gained from industrial disputes" (Kelman & Cohen, 1976:79-80).

John Burton and his associates at the Centre for the Analysis of Conflict are widely seen as the inventors of this technique. Burton (1969:ix), termed his initial efforts exercises in "controlled communication". A pilot workshop was held in London in December 1965. In 1966, a follow-up second project, which included three American academics, R.C. North, C.F. Alger, and H.C. Kelman, was held. In that same year, Leonard Doob and William Foltz of Yale University independently began to explore the need for an alternative to traditional approaches to border disputes. Their first workshop, called Fermeda, which dealt with border conflict involving Somalia, Ethiopia, and Kenya, took place in August 1969. [8] Subsequently, Herbert C. Kelman and Stephen Cohen (1976:79-90), developed an approach that is essentially a synthesis of Burton's and Doob's techniques. More recently, some other scholars, notably Levi and Benjamin (1977:405-425), have refined and amplified the technique further.

The concern of this and the following chapters is to analyse how the application of techniques associated with, and developed by, problem-solving workshops, have influenced our knowledge of conflict processes and the techniques needed to enhance their termination. More specifically, how do the experiences and results of these workshops contribute to the development of a more general theory of conflict processes and their resolution? One argument in favour of this approach to conflict resolution is that it is more successful than more traditional approaches, and is premised on the assumption that indeed one can train individuals to be mediators and diplomats. Another, is the learning potential of the workshop approach. In an attempt to deal with these questions, this chapter is divided into two parts. First, a critical explication of the domain assumptions and propositions that inform this approach will be attempted. The second section analyses Levi and Benjamin's (1977:405-425) model of conflict resolution, since it seems to underlie most attempts at problem-solving and conflict termination or resolution. The special problems associated with Levi and Benjamin's model will be tentatively discussed, since these will be dealt with more fully in the following three chapters.

4.2 Domain assumptions and basic postulates

The conceptualisation of the term "conflict" used in the various problem-solving workshops is a broad one. Conflict is conceptualised as essentially a social and interactional phenomenon, with both constructive and destructive manifestations and implications. The majority of problem-solving workshops, thus conceptualise conflict as a social relationship with both

functional and dysfunctional potential. In this, these workshops subscribe to the view advanced by Coser (1956) and other scholars, who pointed out that even the most violent and widespread social conflict might have some 'beneficial effects', perhaps totally unappreciated by the parties involved or the rest of society at the time. Thus, a conflict could be considered functional for the parties involved and for the society at large (Coser, 1956:24).

Burton (1972a:137-138), comments :

" Conflict, like sex, is an essential creative element in human relationships. It is the means to change, the means by which our social values or welfare, security, justice and opportunities for personal development can be achieved. If suppressed...society becomes static... (Conflict is) neither to be deprecated nor feared... Indeed, conflict, like sex, is to be enjoyed".

Coser's initial argument (1956) has since been simplified by many scholars, in the sense that some conflicts are seen to be "functional" rather than "dysfunctional" (Mitchell, 1980:62). A less simplified version argues that, for some parties, factions and individuals, at certain times and under certain specified conditions, being involved in conflict can have beneficial results. These may be 'side 'or 'indirect benefits,' and not immediately apparent, or have little to do with the original goals for which the conflict is being pursued. However, even for an overall social system, positive benefits may accrue in the long (or even short run), even in circumstances where various kinds of conflicts take place. Typical of this perspective is Martin Marty's view :

"...Social science seems to have forgotten that conflict is a form of social interaction... Uncontrolled conflict (and violence) can be destructive, but the important task of creating and maintaining a productive social system is subverted by denying the efficacy of conflict in stabilising the social order and advancing the commonwealth.... The important task is therefore not indiscriminate and undisciplined elimination of conflict, but rather the creation and preservation of devices whereby conflict can be made socially productive..." (Marty, 1964:5).

The above assumptions about the social nature of conflict, and its implications, imply that these workshops do not aim at the total elimination of conflict, but rather at the "management" of conflict (Hill, 1982:113).

It should be apparent from this conceptualisation of conflict, that the approach to conflict resolution termination is interactional. A basic domain assumption upon which this technique rests is that "an understanding of conflict requires a focus on the way in which interactions between the parties - at different levels - create the conditions for conflict, and help to feed, escalate and perpetuate it" (Kelman, 1979:100). Thus the implications are that a conflict involves at least two parties, and that it may manifest itself at different levels of interaction. This again, means "that resolution at one level of interaction, does not imply resolution at all levels of interaction" (Burton, 1972a:5-29).

In the opinion of Hill (1982:113), these problem-solving workshops rest upon five key domain assumptions. These are :

- "(1) Rationality : Individuals pursue their own self-interest and therefore, seek to enhance their relative advantage.
- (2) Methodological Individualism : In any conflict, the basic unit to be considered is the individual humanbeing.
- (3) Adaptive Nature of Humanity : Individuals are fallible, but they also possess the capability of learning and modifying their behaviour based on the results of their experiences.
- (4) Necessity for Political Constraint : Some systems of political order (broadly defined) are needed to maintain conditions of social organization, such as reason and justice.
- (5) Democratic Values of Equity and Liberty : Humanbeings seek a balance between the potential paradox created by desiring no constraint upon their own actions (liberty) and the desire that no one shall have special privileges and/or immunities (equality)."

Burton (1972a:6-9), compares the respective domain assumptions of more traditional mediation and conflict resolution techniques (such as mediation and diplomacy), with the assumptions that underpin his model of conflict resolution. Such a comparison is useful - and is reproduced in its entirety for - it sensitises one to the different contexts associated with different conflict mediation and resolution techniques. Table 1 lists these contrasting domain assumptions.

TABLE 1

Traditional Mediation/Diplomacy	Conflict Resolution
" 1) Mediation is an art; there are 'born' mediators who cannot pass on their techniques; success is measured by the reputation of mediator as diplomat or lawyer, and not by his performance, for that is determined by the complexity of the situation.	Mediation is a learned technique and performance is measured by success and failure.
2) The personality of the mediator is the important consideration.	Personal temperament is relevant to all occupations, but the presence or absence of learned techniques is the important consideration.
3) 'Time is the essence' : at some stage, which cannot be defined, conflicts can be resolved; at others not.	Conditions in which conflict can or cannot be resolved can be determined : if 'time is the essence', then conflict is like the common cold and will cure itself, making the mediator irrelevant.
4) No two cases are the same; conflicts are like road accidents; they just happen.	There are common patterns in conflicts, making them essentially the same and subject to the same techniques of resolution.
5) The mediator requires powerful support from an international institution, powerful states, or financial institutions.	There is a difference between enforced settlement and resolution of conflict, and the latter is accomplished without support except respect for the professional knowledge and status of the mediator; authority is derived from the parties and not from external institutions.
6) It is the duty of the mediator to suggest solutions.	It is only the parties that can arrive at solutions, and the mediator should never prejudice his position by suggesting them.
7) The mediator's genius is in suggesting reasonable and workable compromises.	No party should ever be asked to accept a compromise, and the mediation exercise is to arrive at alternative goals or means that do not require compromise.

Traditional Mediation/Diplomacy	Conflict Resolution
8) The interests of greater powers and world society as a whole must sometimes be placed before the interests of the parties.	In any conflict, the relations of the parties most directly concerned take precedence, and are then subjected to the resolution of any conflict they have with interests at other levels.
9) Relations between states are relations between authorities within them, and mediation must be between authorities involved in a conflict situation.	World society is not comprised of states as separate entities, but of transactions of all kinds that cut across state boundaries : mediation must be at different levels involving different parties and different issues, sometimes parties within parties, and not legal authorities.
10) International conflict is separate from domestic conflict.	International conflict is usually a spillover from domestic conflict in which parties seek foreign assistance, and mediation must involve domestic consideration of ethnic and other groups, and not be confined to international conflict.
11) States 'should' accept processes of arbitration and mediation.	No state can be expected to submit to third-party judgments or be involved in processes which place it in a position of having to accept a consensus view. Failure to accept some form of arbitration or mediation is a reflection on the mediation process and not evidence of a government's unwillingness to resolve the conflict or to cooperate in world society.
12) Some decision-makers behave 'irrationally'.	Parties to a conflict are responding to the situation in the ways that appear most beneficial to them in the light of the knowledge they have of the motivations of others and the options open : 'irrational' behaviour is behaviour not understood or not approved by others.
13) No fixed procedures are possible.	A quite rigid adherence to rules of procedure is desirable once they have been tested.
14) The mediator should be one person.	The mediator needs to be a panel of specialists in the field of conflict. "

One could add more differences in assumptions and approach between traditional mediation and conflict resolution as it is used within the framework of these problem-solving workshops. But these seem sufficient to emphasise one significant methodological difference : the approach adopted by Burton and his associates is deductive, rather than inductive. Rather than work from ascertained "facts" in a particular situation, the attempt by the mediator is to apply generalizations about conflict to the particular situation being examined, thereby helping to analyse and explain it.

"There is a hidden postulate here. If the role of the third party is confined to introducing information about conflicts and is not concerned with suggesting "solutions" or arriving at "assessments", there is an implied assumption that the analysis of a particular conflict, within this analytical framework, itself leads to the resolution of the conflict. The postulate implies that once the relationships have been analysed satisfactorily, once each side is accurately informed of the perceptions of the other, of the alternative values and goals, of the alternative means and costs of attaining them, there are outcomes acceptable to the parties."It is further assumed, for instance, that "some crucial misunderstandings will be revealed that will alter the relationship" (Burton, 1972a:9).

Thus, the above assumption implies that conflict contains "alterable components" such as "perception of external conditions, selection of goals, and assessments of values and means in relation to assessments of costs and conflict!" This proposition rests upon the further assumption of human rationality (Mitchell, 1981a:46; Janis, 1968:454-479).

The previous postulate rests on another assumption, namely that conflict is essentially subjective. The traditional view is that while subjective elements are present, there is a dominant "objective" conflict of interests. The notion of what Burton calls (1972a:10), "a fixed amount of satisfaction", by which he means a proverbial "'cake' of given size to be divided in some proportion", underlies the more traditional view of conflict. Conflict is subjective in at least three ways. First, in terms of the perceptions of the parties involved in the relationship. Secondly, in terms of the values pursued by the contending parties, and, thirdly, in terms of the priorities assigned to goals and values by the parties.

A further assumption, shared by various conflict analysts, is that conflict arises from "position scarcity and resource scarcity". Hirsch (1977:5-6), for instance, has shown that circumstances of scarcity may arise over material goods (mineral resources, motor cars), and "positional goods" (roles as managers, permanent members of the UN Security Council), the latter being scarce in some absolute and final sense. In this particular sense, the sources of conflict may be "objective". "However, the subjective elements of perception by the parties is accompanied by another, namely the assessment of values sought in relation to costs". In theory, if not in practice, no goal has an absolute value. On the Burtonian model, goal - changing in policy could be "due only to subjective elements - i.e., to perceptions of the situation and to reassessments of values in relation to costs" (Burton, 1972a:11).

It is further assumed, that the assessment of values in

relation to costs, is "intrinsic" to conflict itself. Burton (1972a:11-12), for one, questions whether there can be talk of an "objective" conflict of interests. If not, then it gives rise to the question to what extent is conflict due to false perceptions of the motivations of the other party, and to erroneous forecasting of costs (i.e., wrong assessments of strength of commitments on the part of the other party) in relation to values sought?

The entire issue of the subjective nature of conflict rests on the assumption that images of reality tend to create their own reality. For instance, "an image of another state as a threat could lead to defensive measures that may persuade that state to increase its military capabilities, and the correctness of the original image appears to be confirmed. A tangible breakthrough would be made in the abilities of states to manage their interstate relations if, means were found to alter the relationship from one in which 'fixed' or 'negative outcomes' were anticipated, to one in which the possibilities of 'positive or variable' outcomes for all parties were perceived" (Mitchell, 1973:123-132).

Based on this description, the inherent subjective nature of conflict is taken as a basic point of departure. This does not mean that conflicts do not have objective elements. Chris Mitchell (1973:128), has discussed at length the elements behind the argument that conflict is subjective. He summarizes this view as follows:

"While a conflict may be objective at a particular point in time, changes in the parties' objectives, preferences, evaluations, and calculations that occur over a period of time render it a changeable and hence an intensely

subjective phenomenon. Conflict may be described as subjective, then, in the sense that changes occur within the parties themselves (and in their orientations to the dispute forming part of their environment), rather than in the "objective" situation external to them from which the originally mutually incompatible goals arose".

If conflict is defined subjectively, the method of resolving it must include changes in the subjective orientations and psychological environments of the parties. Thus the objective of this approach to conflict resolution is to achieve through synthesis a common perspective on the conflict. This involves a mutual "reperception" of the conflict from a contest to be won to a problem to be solved; hence the term "problem-solving" workshop. Therefore, an implicit assumption of this approach is that any "zero-sum conflict" [9] may in principle be reformulated as a "positive-sum conflict." [10]

Finally, as argued elsewhere, a distinction is made between the resolution and the settlement of conflict. When parties are compelled into accepting a solution, the conflict is said to be "settled", but not "resolved". For resolution to occur, "Conflicts must not be suppressed by threat, and they must not be settled by reference to past norms and practices that are no longer perceived as relevant or just" (Burton, 1972b:138). A conflict is "resolved", as distinct from "settled", when the "outcome is self-supporting, and for this to happen the new relationships must be negotiated freely by the parties themselves" (Burton, 1969:171). Conflicts are to be resolved to the satisfaction of the parties,

and, to the greatest possible extent possible, by the parties themselves. Thus, Burton and Mitchell argue, parties are to be encouraged to develop "integrative solutions" and should not be required to "compromise".

Nevertheless, both Burton (1969,1972a,1972b,1972c), and Mitchell (1980,1981a,1981b), accept that other elements of the international community may have legitimate interests in the outcome of the conflict. This is essentially a recognition of the fact that parties to a conflict do not exist in isolation to the general international system. Thus, resolution must be compatible with the wider interests of the international system. This results in a complex and paradoxical situation which Burton (1972c:138-139), characterises as follows:

- (1) "How can conflict be resolved without third party coercion, without reliance upon conserving laws and norms, and to the satisfaction of the parties?"
- (2) "How can social needs be ensured without authorities intervening in ways which would prevent resolution of the conflict by the parties?"

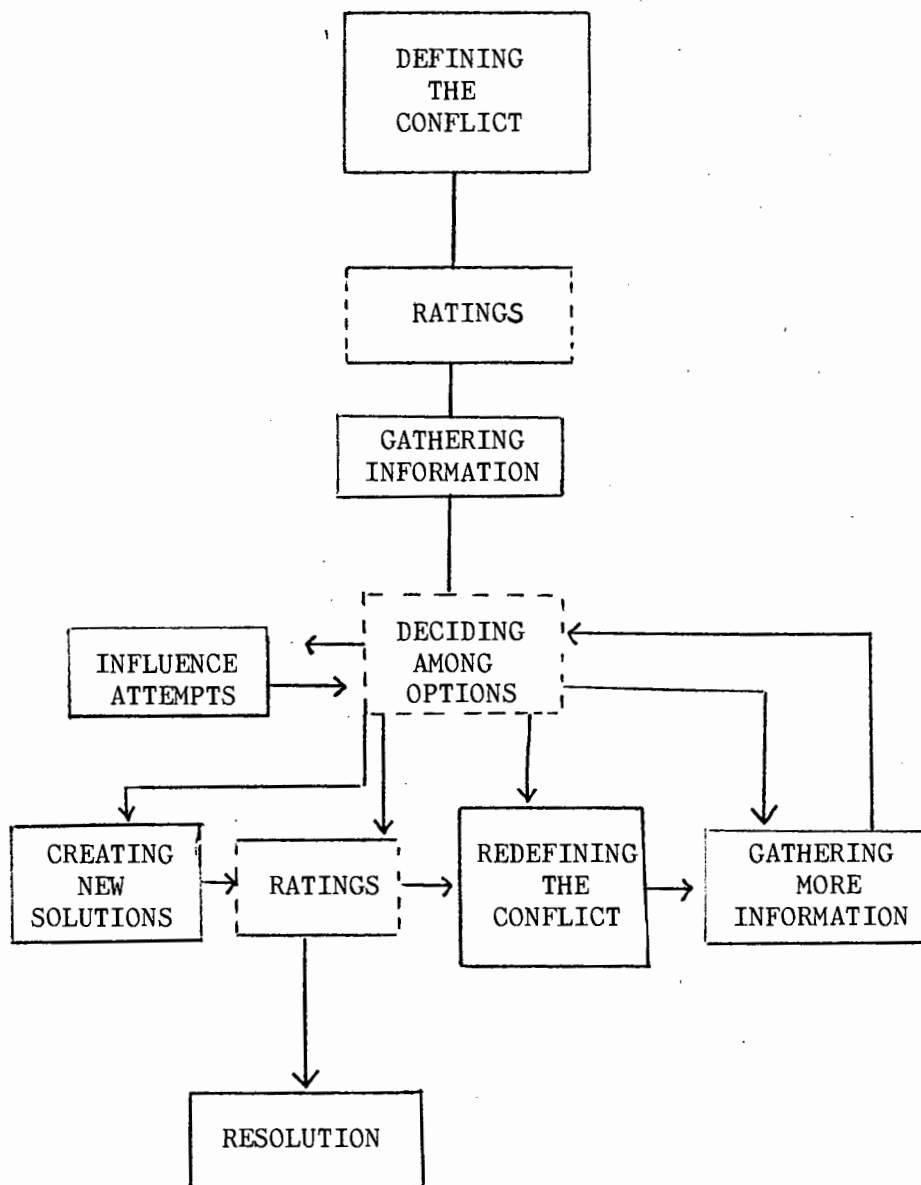
The problem-solving workshops represent an attempt to deal with this essential paradox.

Having dealt with the domain assumptions that underpin models of conflict resolution, the focus now shifts to an examination of what a problem-solving workshop is. Levi and Benjamin (1977:405-425), have proposed a model of conflict resolution that appears to underlie most existing attempts at problem-solving workshops. It is this model that will now be examined.

4.3 Conflict resolution - the basic model

Figure 1, graphically presents the key processes and procedures associated with Levi and Benjamin's model of conflict resolution.

FIGURE 1: THE CONFLICT RESOLUTION MODEL



Levi and Benjamin's model of conflict resolution (1977:405-425), is based on six experimental workshops on conflict in the Middle East. They wish to demonstrate "the need for optimal balance" between 'focus and flexibility' in the area of conflict resolution. 'Focus' is defined as "the function of exclusion and constancy, flexibility that of variety and variability" (Levi & Benjamin, 1977:405). A central paradox, which is present in all applied behavioural science application, is the simultaneous need for these two paradoxical requirements. Argyris (1970), Bennis (1966), and others emphasise the need for such flexibility in organizations and people in a rapidly changing world. In a perceptive study, Rogers (1961) argues that those elements in human culture which limit our ability to be flexible set real restraints to our human potential. In the area of conflict research, flexibility is a central and constant need. For example, John may desire A and Andrew may want B, yet both cannot be realised. As long as John persists in wanting A and Andrew in wanting B - and both define A and B in zero-sum terms - the conflict will remain unresolved. The moment A and B are not defined in total mutually exclusive terms, the prospects for resolution increase.

" There is, however, a contrasting theme. Flexibility requires an ability to view problems inclusively (holistically), to take as much as possible into consideration, to change one's views easily. Human endeavour, however, requires at times just the opposite : the ability to focus on certain details exclusive of others, to decide between alternatives." This need for 'focus' plays a pivotal role in most intervention strategies, and is particularly important in 'task-oriented interventions' (Blake and Mouton, 1971); Kepler and Tregoe, 1965). In the view of Levi and Benjamin (1977:406), 'focus'

and 'flexibility', should also play a central role. They also give equal consideration to process in their model. Fisher (1972) has summarised advances in conflict resolution. Walton (1969) has dealt extensively with two-party or bi-party conflicts. Blake and Mouton (1961) have analysed conflict between groups in industry. Doob and Foltz (1973) have worked with community conflict, while Burton (1969) and Doob (1970) wrote on efforts to resolve international conflict. Fisher (1972:67-94) suggests that the functions of the third-party are to "(a) induce and maintain mutual motivation in resolving conflict, (b) improving communication between the parties in conflict, (c) diagnose the conflict, and (d) regulate interaction between the parties". This is achieved by being "facilitative, non-coercive, diagnostic, non-directive, and non-evaluative".

Thus, in terms of function and roles, the third-party consultant has been essentially process-oriented. However, it is Levi and Benjamin's contention that conflict resolution involves more than process issues. "The conflict must be resolved. While the exclusive focus on process may alleviate the conflict, it cannot ultimately resolve the conflict. Dealing solely with process addresses symptoms, not the conflict itself"

Levi and Benjamin (1977:407), began each workshop with a 'process-oriented exercise', to relax the tension which exists when conflicting groups first interact. Self-selected pairs, consisting of one member from each opposing group, met 'to get acquainted'. They then introduced each other to the entire group. There are, of course, other alternative "ice breakers", such as "group conversation" (Pfeiffer and Jones, 1970), Blake and Mouton's

(1961), "exchange of images", Fisher's BATNA (Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement) or even, as Doob (1970) reports, lengthy T-group and brainstorming sessions.

Following this initial attention to process, the participants are then submitted to their particular 'psychological approach' to group discussion. The basic approach, formulated in the form of a contract, 'stipulates that each participant tries to adopt a problem-solving orientation and express his views openly and honestly.' All participants agree to respect the confidentiality of the various opinions expressed and to follow the structured but experimental model of the consultants.

With these process preliminaries completed, the business of resolution can then start in all earnest. Each of the elements presented in Figure 1, will now be systematically outlined.

4.3.1 Defining and rating of the conflict

Conflicts often tend to be unclear. The first steps in the model of Levi and Benjamin (1977:408-411), therefore is to define the nature of and issues involved in the conflict. To put it differently, to determine precisely what is at conflict. This they accomplish by "having the opposing parties define two solutions, each of which is favoured by one side and opposed by the other." This focus on the conflict also serves a process function by clarifying the degree to which the parties are not in conflict with one another, thus reducing the tensions between them. To accomplish this, they asked each individual participant to write down privately his most "desirable goal" which he suspected the other side opposed. Each person then announced his/her particular goal, and all issues

(goals) were then listed. For example, at the Nachsholim workshop (Benjamin and Levi, 1975), the noted list consisted of "ending Jewish immigration", "no third state should be established in the West Bank", "Israel should retreat from all areas conquered in the Six Day war", "a Palestinian state should be established in accordance with the 1947 partition plan", and "a Palestinian state headed by the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) should be established".

While going through this list, the participants discovered that they were in agreement on the last two points, while at least one participant opposed each of the others. The group then voted on the most important issue on which to concentrate; the role of the PLO in a Palestinian state. The Arab participants favoured "PLO Rule", while the Jewish members rejected such an outcome.

In order to establish the degree of conflict at that point, the participants were asked to go a step further, when each participant was asked to rate (on a -10 to +10 scale) his "preference for each of the opposing solutions which define the conflict." The degree of conflict is expressed by the degree of divergence of ratings of the two opposing groups for each solution proposed. In the Nachsholim workshop [11], for instance, "PLO Rule" obtained the maximum negative rating of -40 from the four Jewish participants, and +39 from the four Arabs. Apart from establishing whether conflict really exists, these ratings serve another useful purpose. "They provide a criterion measure, some point of reference on which the participants can focus to compare their degree of progress throughout the workshop" (Levi and Benjamin, 1977:410).

The notion of ratings also serves to introduce an important

concept in their model, namely, that of 'total satisfaction'. All the 'ratings' for each proposed solution are added up, providing an 'index of total satisfaction' for that particular solution. When conflict in the group is high this index will be low, since the high negative scores cancel out the high positive ones. For example, in the case referred to above, namely, "PLO Rule", the ratings were $-40 + 39 = -1$. Yet even if all participants equally favour a solution, this index may still be rather low. For example, everyone may submit the low ratings of +1. The aim of their model is not merely to reduce conflict, but to increase 'total satisfaction' with some solution. Levi and Benjamin (1977:410), comment :-

"The evaluation of the conflicting solutions thus serves as a beginning point of reference against which progress can be measured and introduces as goals the reduction of conflicting preferences and the increase in total satisfaction".

The participant's next task is to focus on the most important reasons for preferring one solution over another. To be able to do this, additional information is gathered, with a view toward deciding among options. It is to this aspect that we turn next.

4.3.2 Gathering of information - deciding among options.

Each participant is asked to write down the most important reason for preferring his solution to the opposing one. Each person reports his/her reason, which is then catalogued by the

consultants. To enable the participants to decide among options, the difference between 'preference' and 'belief' is explained, and together,"the preference and belief inherent in each solution are extracted." [12] Thus, for example, from the reason "the PLO aims to destroy Israel" they extracted the preference "Israel's existence", the crucial preference for the Jewish participants, and the belief that the PLO indeed aims to destroy Israel, accepted by all the Jewish participants and rejected by all the Arabs. Similarly, they discovered that the crucial preference for the Arab participants was that "the true and only representative of the Palestinians should head their state", while they believed that the PLO fulfilled that role. The Jewish members thought differently (Levi and Benjamin, 1977:411).

The idea behind the establishment of the respective preferences and beliefs of the participants, is to enable them to obtain a clearer understanding of the sources of the conflict. Beliefs and preferences, also serve to establish whether a particular conflict is over 'means' or attribution rather than over 'ends'. [13]

"By focusing on the sources of the conflict, the gathering of information is intended to help the participants to decide among options and thus, to enhance the prospects for resolution." During the early stages of the model which involves defining the conflict, rating it, and gathering information, their method is relatively structured. The model relies upon particular types of data [14], in order to enhance the prospects for conflict resolution. The emphasis on structure is intended to enhance the process of resolution by providing for a problem-oriented approach amongst the

participants. In addition, it is argued that progress made in this respect, may well increase trust and understanding between the contending parties.

Levi and Benjamin (1977:412) are at pains to point out that structure does not imply "coercion". By providing a structure for gathering the relevant information, they strive to maximize the freedom of the participants by granting them the power of "informed choice" (Argyris, 1970).

Up to now, the primary emphasis has been on focus, namely, a definition of the essential elements and sources of the conflict. The emphasis now shifts to flexibility, enabling the participants, on the basis of the previous focus, "to choose their next step." Since some alternative solutions have already been produced by the conflict definition stage (the conflicting solutions of the participants define the conflict), they already have a basis for 'influence attempts'. On the other hand, these "solutions" are conflicting, and, therefore, creating further new solutions may be called for. The information gathered may have resulted in changed attitudes, and new ratings may be needed to determine whether conflict in fact still exists. The information gathered may have resulted in changed attitudes, and new ratings may be needed to determine whether conflict in fact still exists. The information may also have led to a realization that the conflict was poorly defined, and, thus, to a redefinition of the conflict. Finally, gathering more information may be required before a sensible choice about the other options can be made. In this context the availability of and accessibility to new information are of cardinal importance. Since the choice among the options (which have

been suggested by the participants in the first place) is based on their subjective definition of the situation, the participants are seen to possess the relevant information for choosing and deciding among them. Therefore, the consultant(s) present(s) the participants with the various options for their consideration and decision.

4.3.3 Gathering more information and influence attempts

The general process of the workshop, as illustrated in Figure 1, is to begin with an attempt to define the conflict, which involves that each party is given time to express its view of the conflict situation in terms of the key issues involved. The next step is to gather information regarding conflict processes in general and the particular conflict in question. The third stage involves an assessment of the options available to each party, and in some of their workshops a decision is actually made on which option should be pursued. Attempts to influence the parties' preferences for a given option may be undertaken during this stage. These "influence attempts" may also be sought by the parties themselves. The process of influencing the participants, "is intended to allow the participants to make a rational choice among various options!" The consultants are also involved, in the sense, that they highlight the inherent limitations associated with each of the options. Part of these "influence attempts" is a comprehensive debate on the advantages and disadvantages of the different options. The role of the consultant(s) is to assist the participants to make 'reasoned choices' (Levi and Benjamin, 1977:413).

Following this third stage, the workshop may develop into

one of four directions, namely :-

- "(1) Efforts may be undertaken to generate new options (i.e. possible 'solutions').
- (2) Actual resolution or termination of the conflict may occur as a result of the options selected in the earlier stage.
- (3) Based on the information obtained in the second stage, an attempt may be made to redefine the conflict (with the assistance of the consultants) so as to make it more amenable to resolution; and
- (4) It may be decided that additional information is needed to proceed further, either regarding conflict processes in general or in terms of specific information on the given conflict. In the case of the latter situation, a 'fact-finding mission' may be necessary." (Levi and Benjamin, 1977:413-414).

Figure 1 illustrates these four possibilities.

In the case of the first and the fourth outcome, the generation of additional information is required. This is achieved through asking each participant to write down the most important rationale for each of his preferred options or choices. The model operates on the premise that increased information may well assist in the formulation of the eventual 'solution'. However, since total information is impossible, an increase in information as such is not a sufficient condition for resolution. Thus, new solutions may have to be generated by the application of other techniques. These will now be briefly discussed.

4.3.4 Creating new solutions

It is likely that somewhere in the process of conflict resolution

new solutions will be generated, even if these are revisions or restatements of one of the initial positions. In contrast to gathering additional information, which serves mainly a 'focusing' function in the model, creating new solutions serves essentially a 'flexibility' function of producing new ideas for consideration. Thus, while the former process lends itself to incremental thinking akin to De Bono's (1970) 'vertical thinking', the latter requires the flexible skill which he terms 'lateral thinking'. To create flexible (lateral) thinking, Levi and Benjamin, have experimented with various techniques such as brainstorming. [15] The principle of this technique consists of participants suggesting new and even 'wild ideas'. At this stage no one is allowed to judge these ideas, in order to encourage maximal freedom of imagination and expression.

At another of their workshops, the one at Nachsholim, they experimented with a variation of brainstorming. Here individuals worked separately rather than in a single group. A large sheet of paper was given to each participant, and he/she was requested to write down every possible idea (in accordance with brainstorming instructions) and also to examine each other's sheets to gain additional suggestions. In the experience of the authors, a conflict over means is sometimes open to resolution via what they term an "insurance policy", "a solution which contains provisions to protect a threatened party."

Depending upon the degree of complexity, difficulty, and symbolic importance of the conflict, participants may participate in the problem-solving workshop for a very short time, without utilizing every option, or else participate in it much longer,

'moving back and forth' among the suggested options. Solutions to certain issues may result in new conflicts. Levi and Benjamin claim that their model "balances the focus requirements of following a certain logical progression among certain stages with the flexibility needs of being able to choose, after information gathering, amongst a number of options" (Levi and Benjamin, 1977:418). The function of creating new solutions (and the rating of these), is to enable a redefining of the conflict to take place. Redefining of a conflict is a logical step before its resolution.

A comparison with typical problem-solving models, such as those developed by Zand, Miles, and Lytle (1970), and illustrated in Figure 2, serves to highlight the similarities and differences between such general problem-solving models and Levi and Benjamin's (1977) model of conflict resolution. This is briefly attempted in the following section.

4.3.5 A comparison with a problem-solving model

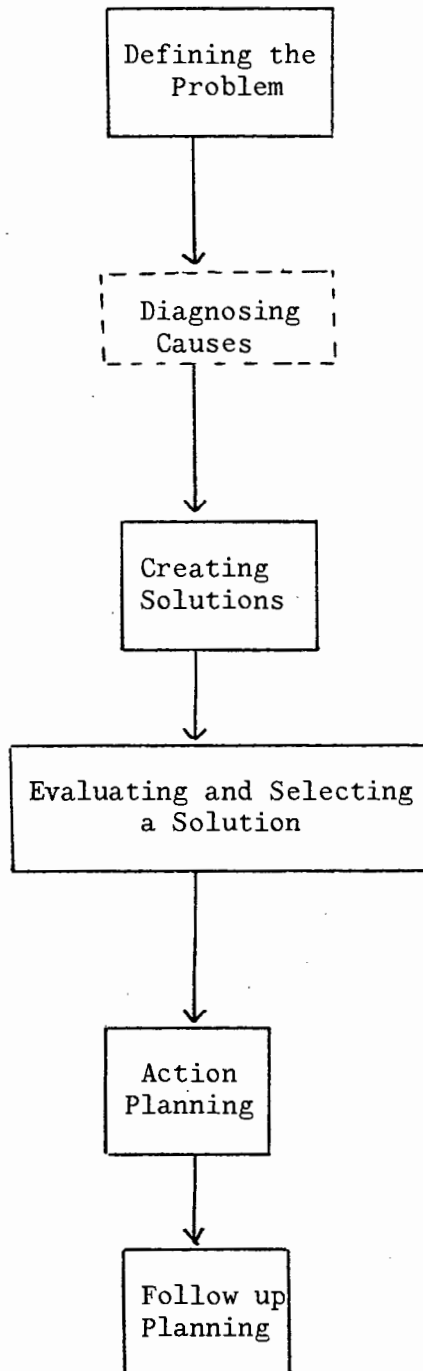
At the outset the two models follow essentially a similar course, "since conflict resolution is basically a very special case of problem-solving" (Kelman, 1972; and Kelman and Cohen, 1976:79). First the problem is defined, and then information is gathered. The rating of the conflict forms part of the information, so does the diagnosing of causes. Then, however, the models diverge.

"The basic difference between general problem-solving and conflict resolution is with the former the problem tends to be of an 'external', 'objective nature' (e.g. constructing a bridge, the allocation of resources), while with the latter the issue is normally 'internal' and 'essentially subjective'" (Burton, 1969, 1972).

In the more 'objective' problem-solving situation [16], the gathering of information often leads logically to creating solutions and evaluation. However, on the other hand, in the case of conflict resolution, the generation of more information, although important for the operation of the model, does not in itself result in resolution. The subjective nature of the conflict itself, coupled to the perceptions of the participants of the values, interests, and costs involved, and the selection of the appropriate time for intervention, tend to complicate the process of resolution. In the model of conflict resolution, the element of choice between alternatives always involves subjective dimensions and often mutually exclusive views and positions. 'Deciding among options' is invariably a more complex and subjective process, which is heavily influenced by the particular historical experience and political and organizational context within which the contending parties find themselves.

Figure 2 illustrates the basic components of Zand, Miles, and Lytle's (1970) typical problem-solving model.

FIGURE 2: THE PROBLEM-SOLVING MODEL



Levi and Benjamin's model (1977) also differs from the more conventional problem-solving model in that their four options referred to earlier, do not lead to a predetermined outcome, but may continue to recycle in various ways until the conflict is (hopefully) finally resolved. Their model places much emphasis on 'flexibility' due to the subjective nature of conflict. Each stage of the procedure generates new information which may be relevant to its resolution. The relevant information cannot be produced at the outset. It is continuously generated as the participants disclose (and discover) the bases of their positions and disagreements. Levi and Benjamin (1977:421) characterise their model as "a search into the minds of the conflicting parties, probing for those cognitive and emotional elements that might constitute a mutually satisfactory solution". Viewed in this way, it is obviously very different from mathematical models of conflict resolution which assume access to all information at the outset (Luce and Raiffa, 1957; Bain, Howard, and Saaty, 1971), which clearly is not the case here.

"The emphasis upon greater 'flexibility' in their model suits the 'task requirements' of conflict resolution. It also aids the 'process requirements' of the model. Participants have a need for autonomy. They want to make their own decisions, and they resent being passively submitted to a predetermined model, especially while dealing with tension-producing conflict. Accordingly, when the tension is highest (following the initial definition of the conflict and the justification of the various stances taken by the participants), the participants are given the choice among the various options or alternatives."

4.4 Further considerations

In their model, Levi and Benjamin place special emphasis upon the 'focusing role' of conflict definition and information gathering, versus the 'flexibility function' of generating new outcomes. Yet process considerations can decrease the relationship between the particular option and the emphasis on focus or flexibility. Each option can be pursued by methods involving varying degrees of structure. For instance, participants in the Maagen Michael 11 workshop (Levi and Benjamin, 1975), 'an ongoing work and study group oriented toward a therapeutic, human relations approach', used a Gestalt (Fagin and Shepard, 1970) technique for information gathering which proved reasonably effective for both generating new information and changing attitudes. On the other hand, Bouchard (1969), has demonstrated that brainstorming techniques may not always be the most effective in creating new options. Personality and organizational variables seem to play a role, and, therefore, participants must be given some choice between specific techniques.

At times participants simply do not wish to act constructively. Levi and Benjamin (1977:422), stress the tendency among participants to debate when tension is high. "Often a free discussion is preferred over a more focused and structured one." At such times the consultant's interventions will often be aimed at "helping to restore the 'focus' and 'flexibility needs' of the model. Thus, for example, if the 'task requirement' is information generation, the consultant can summarise from time to time the main points which have been raised in the discussion to provide the required 'focus'. If, on the other hand, creating new solutions (options) is required, the consultant can call for new ideas."

In a perceptive contribution, Kelman (1972), has extensively analysed the strengths and weaknesses of the problem-solving workshop in general, into which Levi and Benjamin's model falls, as a technique for resolving international conflict. He also discusses the different approaches inherent in the models of Burton (1969) and Doob (1970), and gives special attention to the proximity of the participants and the workshop itself to the actual decision-making process. Levi and Benjamin's workshops have been quite removed from this process. One should not deduce from this, however, that they favour such distance. [17] Their research emphasis has been to develop an applied model of conflict resolution focusing on the internal dynamics of the model itself, with the goal of arriving at more mutually satisfactory solutions. Clearly, their model is thus relevant to both Burton's and Doob's work, as well as to domestic conflict situations.

The authors concur with Kelman (1972) that, while no panacea, 'the problem-solving workshop is a useful addition to the tools of international conflict resolution.' They assume that most conflicts are susceptible to resolution, but realize that their model is only "a first step" toward what could eventually be achieved in this field (Levi and Benjamin, 1977:422).

The problem-solving workshop is designed to achieve two purposes. It should provide researchers with an opportunity to observe the dynamics of real conflict behaviour, which means, that it is research of the participant-observer variety. Secondly, it is intended to provide a learning environment for both the conflicting parties and the consultants. This second purpose is essentially a 'service function', somewhat analogous to that of the psychoanalyst

or the social worker. However, "these two purposes - that of research and of learning - may not always be entirely compatible. Thus, any given workshop may tend toward the realization of one of these purposes at the expense of the other" (Hill, 1982:117).

A critical stage in the working of the problem-solving workshop, is the definition of the dimensions of the particular conflict under consideration. "One could blithely state that the parties will be allowed to define these. However, this does not solve the problem, but rather forces a reformulation of the original question." We now ask, "Who are the parties?" Burton (1969:13) comments :-

"An analytical approach requires the identification of the parties to any conflict in relation to the issues that are in dispute between them". (Own emphasis.)

Furthermore, he asserts that, "...Unless each party can be identified, unless representative views and aims can be determined there is no possibility of mediation in any form" (Burton, 1972a:15). Thus, conflicts are defined by issues, which subsequently determine the parties involved. [18] However, the exact method of selecting representatives of these parties differs from workshop to workshop.

Within this context a provisional examination of the role of the third party is useful. The assumptions regarding conflict processes in general [19] and the design of the conflict resolution model used by the problem-solving workshop approach, in particular, impose certain restrictions on the role of the third party. The third party is primarily a 'facilitator' who seeks to :

(1) establish "the conditions in which negotiation will lead to a de-escalation and avoid escalation of the conflict"; (2) "extend the range of choices of functional cooperation"; and (3) "present the conflict as a problem to be solved and not as a contest to be won" (Burton, 1969:157). The primary function of the problem-solving workshop is to prepare the groundwork for subsequent negotiation. "Thus, it is a preliminary step to more traditional methods of third-party intervention, not necessarily a replacement for them. However, it is also possible that as a result of the workshop, parties will resolve the conflict without the assistance of a third party. Therefore, it is important to emphasise that conflict resolution is not designed to occur within the confines of the workshop context (although this possibility is not ruled out); rather, the workshops are designed to enhance the chances of success of future and more comprehensive resolution attempts"(Hill, 1982:118); Kelman, 1972:187; Burton, 1972a:27; and Kelman and Cohen, 1976:88).

Since the emphasis of this approach is on resolution (as opposed to settlement), the third party must be 'non-coercive.' The third party should not start the workshop with his own subjective definition of the conflict, or with a preconception as to the precise nature of its resolution. In this special sense, the third party should be relatively 'neutral'. However, this 'neutrality' should not be seen as disinterest. The third party should be actively interested in a resolution, "otherwise the parties may react negatively to what to them may appear as aloofness" (Fisher, 1972:78). Further, a basic assumption of the problem-solving workshop is that the third party is there "to provide an insight

into, and understanding of, conflict processes. Thus, the third party is not an area specialist or a historian!" Rather, "the third party is someone knowledgeable about the nature of conflict processes in general (rather than the unique characteristics of the particular conflict), the behaviour patterns of actors in the international system, and the functional imperatives of the international system" (Burton, 1972a:12).

The interventions of the third party are designed to enable parties to see how their particular conflict relates to more general characteristics of conflict processes. The insights and training derived from the workshop should then enable them to determine methods of peaceful conflict termination. Finally, the third party is intended to be 'amoral' in the sense that no judgements or normative statements are to be made regarding the behaviour of the parties. If at all possible, the third party should adopt a "case-worker", or "supportive, role" (De Reuck, 1974:69).

4.5 Critique

At the outset it needs to be emphasised, that problem-solving workshops are not meant as panaceas or as total solutions to conflict."They constitute special kinds of inputs into a more comprehensive resolution process" (Kelman, 1972:169). They are not designed to be alternatives to diplomatic and political negotiations, but supplementary or preparatory to them. The ✓ procedures associated with these workshops are meant to prepare the ground for negotiation and establishing some of the preconditions of agreement - not as a substitute for negotiation.

In the most general terms, the strength of the workshop approach is that it allows certain processes of communication that are difficult to achieve in the settings (particularly the more formal, politicised and public ones) where conflicting parties usually interact. Kelman (1972:187) comments :-

"...The workshop facilitates such interactions, first, by providing a novel context for communication and, second, by using a unique set of techniques and third-party inputs to guide the communication process".

For the individual participants, the workshop setting also "offers the opportunity to communicate with minimum commitment and risk." This fact not only influences their decision to participate, but also influences the type of communication they are willing to engage in. To provide a constructive setting for communication, Kelman (1972:188) emphasises that, the workshop should "preferably be held under the auspices of some reputable institution independent of the political process which can bring an overarching set of norms to bear on the proceedings".

A workshop held under the auspices of a body such as the United Nations Security Council, for instance, might not provide the required setting, since it does not claim a set of norms independent of those of the member-states."An agency that is nearly transnational in character - set up to perform a function that cuts across (rather than coordinates) national interests - would be more suitable."Burton's and Doob's experiences suggest that such a transnational institution for conflict resolution might be most effective if it included research and training as part of its

activities. In the case of the various workshops organised by Levi and Benjamin, the institutional base was the university. The workshops themselves, provided the normative setting of a research and 'learning laboratory'.

The primary goal of a problem-solving workshop is to transmit the changes and solutions it has generated into the policy process." However, in terms of methodology, method, and design, the problem-solving workshop is more effective in producing changes in its participants and to generate innovative solutions than it is to transfer these outputs to the policy process." Much of the workshop's strength derives from its separation from the policy process. Kelman (1972:195) comments :-

"It is held under independent auspices, in a setting removed from decision-making agencies, with participants acting as relatively uncommitted individuals, and according to ground rules that encourage the transcendence of official positions. All of these features, by removing some of the usual barriers to change, make its occurrence more probable, but by the same token they make its transfer more difficult".

The 'problem of transfer' involves two interrelated issues. "First, if an individual changes in the workshop setting - that is, if he reassesses his perceptions and attitudes and accepts a new approach to resolve the conflict - what is the likelihood that he/she will maintain these new attitudes and reformulations once he/she returns to his/her home setting? Second, assuming he/she does - or to the extent that he/she does - maintain these changes, what is the likelihood that he/she will be able to bring his/her new attitudes and changed perceptions effectively to bear on the policy process? "

The first issue is common to all types of workshops, ranging from those primarily oriented toward affecting individual change to those oriented toward organizational problem-solving. It refers to what has been termed the "re-entry" problem. The workshop takes the participant into a 'new world', "frees him/her from his/her usual pressures and constraints that bind him/her to a limited perspective, and thus allows him/her to re-examine his/her assumptions and to develop new ways of looking at things. But once he/she leaves this more open and protective environment and returns to the real world, there is the constant danger that the old dominant frame of mind will again reassert itself. Moreover, the participant may find that the new ideas he/she expresses are met with hostility and the proposals he/she advances are systematically rejected." [20] The severity of the re-entry problem varies as a function of many factors. But, one has to concur with Kelman (1972:195), "that given an influence attempt that removes an individual or a small group from their usual environments, any feature that enhances the probability for change almost invariably compounds the problem of re-entry".

The ease of maintaining changes produced in the workshop depends partly on the nature of the setting and the experiences it provided for the participants. Walton (1970:482-483), comments :

"...comparative insulation allows for deeper immersion in the mental and emotional processes of the workshop and permits the development of a 'cultural island', which in turn encourages participants to challenge cherished assumptions, break old thought processes, and modify attitudes".

However, it also has real disadvantages : "The cultural island may be considered 'too complete.' Moreover, participants may lose credibility if they express ideas that are at variance with commonly held views" (Walton, 1970:483-484).

Thus changes are more likely to take place in a 'cultural island', but more difficult to sustain once the individual returns to the 'mainland'.

The question of the participants' organisational backgrounds and contacts has a bearing on the second problem involved in the transfer of changes generated by a workshop : what is the likelihood that participants will be able to bring their new attitudes and formulations (assuming that these have been maintained) to bear on the policy process? Since the workshop is, by its nature, removed from the policy process, the problem of feeding its products back into that process must inevitably arise. The ease and success of achieving such feedback depends largely on the participants' composition and orientation and their relationship to the policy process.

In general, it seems that if the decision-makers are involved in the planning for the workshop, if the workshop organisers consult with them before and after, and if the participants are close to the centre of decision-making and are at least informally acting as 'representatives' of the decision-makers, then the opportunity for feedback and re-entry will improve. However, there may well be less change in this case than in a workshop where the participants act purely as private citizens. The closer the participants are to decision-making bodies, the more likely that they are to be constrained by official positions and

decision-makers' expectations, and the less likely they are to be open to change. Whatever changes do occur, however, will come to the attention of the decision-makers much more readily in this case. Kelman (1972:198) views the problem in the following way :-

"Thus it would appear that there is a reciprocal relationship between change and transfer : the closer the participants are to the center of decision-making, the less open they are to change, but the more capable they are to feed whatever changes they do experience into the policy process."

However, "the problem is even more complex than this. Whether or not participants closest to the locus of decision-making are most likely to inject their changes into the policy process may well depend on the nature of the changes in question, as well as on the precise relationship of the participants to the decision-making process." For example, if change takes the form of some new learning about the intentions of the other party, then the proposition is likely to hold. On the other hand, if the changes experienced are more fundamental - if the participant leaves the workshop convinced that the whole policy pursued by his/her government is inappropriate, and committed to a basic reformulation of the issues and the possibilities for solution, then his/her proximity to the locus of decision-making may make little difference. It may not improve his/her ability to inject his/her new insights into the policy process and may, in fact, reduce it, depending on the exact nature of his/her relationship to the decision-makers" (Kelman, 1972:passim).

In conceptualising this problem, our starting point is that the workshop approach can change individual perceptions, attitudes, and formulations of problems and solutions." Thus the techniques used within the workshop setting can be most useful when directed at those points in the decision-making process at which individual perceptions and formulations of the conflict become relevant and important." It can be argued that diplomats and foreign affairs officials do not represent such points in the process. They tend to act within a highly institutionalised conceptual framework; the assumptions of that framework are built into the routine operations of the decision-making apparatus and are constantly reinforced by the interactions of the various units. Thus, it is not too likely that (acting within their roles) these individuals would effectively use changes gained through a workshop experience.

On the other hand, the situation may be different for legislators, or for executives of powerful and influential interest organisations. Such individuals are not necessarily bound by the perspectives of the decision-makers and are relatively free to promote changes in policy. Thus the analysis tentatively suggests that the ideal participants in a workshop are not necessarily those closest to the locus of decision-making. This seems to hold even if the goal of a workshop is to have maximal impact on the policy process.

Viewed analytically, Levi and Benjamin's model of conflict resolution has much in common with the work of Burton, Doob, Kelman and Fisher. Essentially all these models use the same instruments of knowledge, discussed in Eugene J. Meehan's writings on reasoned argument. Like Meehan (1982:11), these models start with

Description, which deals with such issues as adequate description (subjectivity); conceptualisation (the problem of ambiguity); definition; measurement and indicators, and conceptualisation and classification. This is followed by classification, which relates to the ranking of the conflict under investigation. After classification, the models allow for generalization, which takes place following the gathering of more information and the redefining of the conflict. The final stage in these models relates to the generation of choices, which is intended to result in the creation of new solutions. The normative dimension of choice, relates to aspects such as : (a) The contextuality of choices; (b) patterns of action; (c) the structuring of alternatives; (d) normative variables of choice; (e) empirical dimensions of choices, and (f) priorities.

The element of choice, which is at the heart of models of conflict resolution is exercised with reference to the knowledge and experience of the participants, the personality factors of the participants, and the risks and costs associated with different choices. It is assumed that individuals involved in conflict will make a reasonably 'rational' calculation of the benefits and costs associated with different choices.

The various workshops all assume a rather direct nexus between thought and action. To put it differently, it is assumed that people in conflict think first before they act. Furthermore, it is assumed that because people are capable of rational thought, their actions will also be reasonably 'rational'. This assumption seems highly suspect in the real world of conflict. People may, for instance, engage in conflict before subjecting such behaviour to

dispassionate and rational reflection. The element of thought may indeed only enter into the equation once various avenues of action have been tried and found wanting. There seems to be a constant tension between thought and action. Especially in conflict relationships, people often tend to act first and then think about their actions, or the consequences of their actions. The analogy of the Kuhnian paradigm seems appropriate here, in the sense that behaviour patterns, policies, and assumptions are only really changed and challenged when the dominant 'paradigm' itself is seen to be in serious trouble. When the person or group exhausts their options. [21] The point seems simply that in the case of conflict, one cannot readily assume a one-to-one relationship between what people think and how they act. Thought and action may indeed be at variance.

A further problem which the workshops have to deal with, relates to the unintended consequences that can flow from them. For example, what happens when one of the conflicting parties views conflict and its continuation as functional? Or when the termination of one dimension of a conflict (especially at one level of interaction) generates new conflict at a different level of interaction? This last issue is of considerable importance, especially because conflicts invariably manifest themselves at different levels of interaction.

A final problem that needs to be raised here, relates to the eventuality where the participants in the workshop do not share the goals postulated by the organisers of the workshop. Clearly, in the event of such a development, the workshop will experience serious problems. For instance, it becomes questionable whether a workshop

will be able to yield any results when the participants in it do not share the goals of 'learning' and 'resolution'. It also seems unlikely in such an eventuality that the workshop itself has the potential to influence such participants holding such views to change them. The roles assigned to the third-party within the workshop setting, and especially the emphasis on the 'non-coercive' nature of third-party intervention, seem to imply breakdown of the entire workshop. In any event, if the nature of third-party intervention becomes 'directive' and 'coercive', then it would undermine the objectives postulated for the conflict-resolving workshop. Under such circumstances, both objectives - research and learning - would be seriously undermined.

4.6 Conclusion

This introductory discussion of some of the strengths and weaknesses of the conflict-resolution model, dealt with the problem of transfer, the internal logic of the model, the postulated relationship between thought and action, the problem of unintended consequences, and the possibility of goal variance between participants and organisers. Various other problems have not been discussed here, notably the requirements for and implications of the third-party in the workshop; the ethics of social intervention; the level of analysis problem, and the factor of time and how it relates to intervention, to mention but a few. These and other problems will be addressed in the parts that deal with the application of specific models of conflict resolution.

As far as the strengths of the model are concerned, special mention was made of its capacity to facilitate communication

between conflicting parties, its learning potential both for the third-party and the participants, its capacity to influence and change individual perceptions, and its possibilities for conflict research.

The general set of underlying assumptions regarding the nature of conflict and its resolution for the workshop approach have now been identified. We have also discussed some general characteristics of all problem-solving workshops. The next chapters therefore attempt to analyse the application of specific attempts at conflict resolution. Chapter 5 then focuses on the research efforts of John Burton and his associates.

Endnotes to Chapter 4

1. Kenneth Boulding presents a different view of these three phases :
 "Each particular conflict, however, can be thought of as having a life cycle : it is conceived and born, it flourishes for a while, and then certain processes that are probably inherent in its own dynamic system eventually bring it to an end" (Boulding, 1962:307).
2. The concept "hostilities" is used in its broadest sense. It refers to the first instance of a directed hostile action between the conflicting parties.
3. An attempt to bring hostilities to an end should not be taken to imply that no hostile action takes place during this phase. It is certainly possible that an initial attempt to resolve the conflict may fail and hostilities will be resumed.
4. Many scholars have argued that it is not desirable to seek an absence of conflict, as this would imply perpetuation of the status quo and, thus, stagnation. Conflict is seen as a necessary component to the dynamics of change. For further elaboration of this view, see Johan Galtung (1969) on structural (i.e. latent) versus physical (i.e. manifest) violence and Kenneth Boulding (1962:305-307) on balancing the "bitter and destructive" with the "fruitful and constructive" aspects of conflict.
5. For a useful discussion of traditional approaches to the study and resolution of conflict, see Schuman, F.L. International Politics Anarchy and Order in the World Society, McGraw-Hill, New York, 1965, chapters 5 and 6.
6. Dissatisfaction with traditional techniques has also resulted in other third-party techniques. The interested reader may wish to consult the articles by Ronald Fisher (1972) and John Mroz (1979) which surveys most of these other developments in third party intervention.
7. For further explication of this argument for "integrative" rather than "compromise" solutions, see Follett (1951).
8. Doob, Leonard W., W.J. Foltz et al. Resolving Conflict in Africa: The Fermeda Workshop, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1970. See also, Doob, Leonard W., W.J. Foltz and R.B. Stevens "The Fermeda Workshop : A Different Approach to Border Conflicts in Eastern Africa", Journal of Psychology, vol. 73, no. 2 (1969), pp.249-266.
9. A zero-sum conflict implies a conflict in which the gain by one of the parties, implies the loss by the other in a total sense. In such a conflict it is impossible for both parties to gain (even in relative terms). What the one party gains, the other loses. Gain implies loss in some total sense.

10. A positive-sum-conflict, denotes a conflict where both of the parties gain relatively. The outcome of such a conflict, thus enables both parties to register some gain or other. A positive-sum conflict is often called a variable-sum conflict. For a useful discussion of these two distinctions, see Rapoport, A. and Chammah, A.M. Prisoner's Dilemma: A Study of Conflict and Cooperation, University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbour, 1966.
11. See Benjamin, A. and A.M. Levi. "High school seniors attempt to resolve the conflict : the Nachsholim workshop", Lyunim B'chinuch, 9, 1975. (In Hebrew.)
12. The preferences and beliefs were extracted from the reason "the PLO is the true and only representative of the Palestinians". 'Preferences' refer to preferred opinions, actions, or ideas. 'Beliefs' to the acceptance of a proposition, statement, or fact, as true, on the ground of authority or evidence.
13. For a discussion of the difference between conflict over means and conflict over ends, see the conceptual material presented in chapter 3.
14. Whatever the methodology, one must gather data about the general setting, for instance : the history of the conflict, the geography, demography, economy, and psychology of the communities in conflict, the regional and international contexts of the conflict, and so forth.
15. For an excellent introduction to the techniques associated with brainstorming, see Osborn, A. Applied Imagination, Scriber's, New York, 1957.
16. The writer is not convinced that problem-solving does not also require a model similar to that of Levi and Benjamin, since choice between solutions always involves subjective elements and often conflicting perceptions.
17. Their research simply required the necessary freedom to experiment with different techniques.
18. The issues in conflict, constitute the more 'objective' elements of conflict, since they are based on interests. The perceptions of the parties in conflict, however, introduce a subjective element to the issues.
19. For a discussion of these, see Section 4.2 entitled, "Domain assumptions" in this chapter.
20. Such an outcome materialised in the case of Doob and Foltz's workshop on Northern Ireland. See Doob, Leonard and William J. Foltz. "The Impact of a Workshop upon Grass-Roots Leaders in Belfast", Journal of Conflict Resolution, vol. 18, no. 2, 1974, pp.237-256.

21. The term 'paradigm' is used rather loosely to refer to a set of values, beliefs, orientations and policies held by parties to a conflict.

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CHAPTER 5CONFLICT AND COMMUNICATION - THE WORK OF JOHN BURTON AND HIS ASSOCIATES1. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to isolate, identify and describe the salient features of the problem-solving workshop which is associated with the research of John Burton and his associates. Apart from this, certain of the most important conclusions associated with this research will be presented. Following Hill (1982:119), the various problem-solving workshops have been broadly categorised into four groups. These groups are:

- (1) the London group : those workshops which comprise the work of John W. Burton and his associates; [1]
- (2) the Yale group : workshops organised under the direction of Leonard W. Doob, William Foltz, and their associates; [2]
- (3) the Harvard group : those workshops directed by Herbert C. Kelman, Stephen P. Cohen, and their associates; [3]
- (4) other groups, which refer to a few problem-solving workshops which have not been directly organised by anyone in the abovementioned three groups, but whose work is related to the research efforts of the London, Yale and Harvard groups.

This chapter attempts a critical survey and analysis of the work of the so-called 'London group' in the context of the underlying assumptions about the nature of conflict and its resolution which have been discussed elsewhere. [4]

The initial part of this chapter is devoted to a brief description of the domain assumptions which are implicit in the work which Burton and his associates have done in the field of conflict and its resolution. This will be followed by a more detailed description of the key concepts of "controlled communication", "conflict", and "conflict resolution". What follows then is an analysis of the research setting within which the model of controlled communication has been applied. The chapter concludes with a critical assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the model.

5.2 Domain assumptions

The problem-solving workshop approach to conflict resolution began with the work of John Burton in "controlled communication". The Centre for the Analysis of Conflict was established in 1966 by the University College, London, and its staff comprises political and social scientists. Burton's associates in the Centre included C.R. Mitchell, M.H. Banks, A.J.R. Groom, M.B. Nicholson and A.V.S. de Reuck. [5] The development of the problem-solving workshop approach to conflict resolution was described by Burton (1969:x-xi) in the following way:

" The method developed initially out of a belief that official, historical, journalistic, and even analytically descriptive accounts written up after a crisis, cannot provide answers to many of the questions that are prompted by contemporary interdisciplinary studies of world politics. The obviously desirable procedure was to select a current conflict, preferably

one in which there was actual violence, and to create a situation in which the parties involved would expose their perceptions of each other, their motivations and goals, their internal political problems, their interpretations of events that led up to the conflict, and then to its escalation, and anything else to which contemporary theories of relations between states and of conflict might point. It was made clear that the exercise was an academic one, and that the purpose was not conciliation or mediation, and not to settle the conflict - though it was hoped that the communication established between the parties would be helpful to them."

The practical use of the method thus employed "was ultimately supplemented by a secondary objective : the resolution of conflict." This developed naturally over a period of time from applying the techniques themselves.

Since the domain assumptions implicit in most problem-solving workshops have been discussed elsewhere (see the previous chapter), we shall now turn to a discussion of those assumptions peculiar to the work of Burton and his associates. First, assumptions about the nature and dynamic of conflict will be discussed. This will be followed by a discussion of assumptions which relate to the resolution of conflict.

5.2.1 The nature of conflict

The most important domain assumptions about the nature of conflict, may be summarised as follows:

- " (1) There are patterns which are common to all conflicts. All patterns of conflict are therefore susceptible to the same techniques of resolution.

- (2) International conflict is often an extrapolation from situations of national conflict in which various parties actively attempt to enlist foreign assistance. Mediation in such situations should take cognizance of ethnic and other groups in the domestic environment. Analysis should not be restricted solely to components comprising international conflict.
- (3) The nations of the world are not entities which are either separate or self-sufficient. All states, to a greater or lesser degree, are involved in a complex network of transactions which transcend state boundaries. Conflict is always therefore 'a particular manifestation of a transactional phenomenon.'
- (4) Conflict implies a social relationship which interacts at different levels (what Burton calls 'system levels'). By using such a phrase, Burton is moving in the direction of a structural (environmental) explanation of conflict.
- (5) Conflict arises from resource and position scarcity. The dimension of scarcity denotes the 'objective' element in conflict. [6]
- (6) Conflict is essentially subjective by nature." [7]
- (7) Not all conflicts are negative or destructive. Conflict may also be constructive and "functional"[8] (Burton, 1972a:6-9; Mitchell, 1980:62-75; De Reuck, 1974:64-80).

5.2.2 The resolution of conflict

With regard to the resolution of conflict, the work of Burton and his associates rests upon the following set of assumptions:

- "(1) Mediation is a learned technique and performance is measured by success and failure. This assumption differs from that of traditional mediation and diplomacy which postulates that mediation is an art which cannot be taught.
- (2) While personality factors are relevant to conflict, the presence or absence of learned techniques is crucial for the resolution of conflict.
- (3) Conditions in which conflict can or cannot be resolved may be determined.
- (4) Not all conflicts are able to be resolved. Some conflicts may be difficult to resolve while others may be impossible to resolve. [9]
- (5) There is a basic difference between an imposed settlement and the resolution of conflict. In the case of resolution, authority is exercised by the parties themselves and not by external actors.
- (6) Only the parties to a conflict can arrive at a successful solution, and the mediator should never prejudice his position by making suggestions. This procedure has various implications for the role of third parties [10], which will be dealt with in the discussion on the "research setting".
- (7) In any conflict, the resolution of disputes between parties most directly concerned take precedence to the resolution of any secondary conflict which the principal parties may have with interests at other levels.
- (8) No party should be expected to accept a compromise. The primary objective of the mediation exercise is to arrive at alternative goals or means which do not require compromise.

- (9) Although the information which parties to a conflict possess obviously influences their behaviour, an increase in the quality and extent of such knowledge may enhance the prospect of a resolution.
- (10) A relatively rigid adherence to rules of procedure is desirable once the efficacy and acceptability of such rules have been tested.
- (11) The mediating role in a conflict should be performed by a panel of specialists skilled in the theory and practice of conflict-resolution" (Burton, 1972a:6-9).

These assumptions about the nature of conflict and its resolution are partly derived from a critical analysis of the case method in social psychology and the interactional dynamics inherent in T-groups although they should not be equated with the latter.

[11] "Conflict-resolution workshops exemplify the belief that face-to-face communication between parties in conflict, in a context other than diplomatic negotiations, may contribute to conflict management and resolution"(Kelman, 1972:168). This concept is not new. What is new, however, is the application of concepts and techniques originally employed in behavioural sciences.

After this brief outline of the domain assumptions which inform the work of John Burton and his associates, we shall now examine the key concepts of the Burtonian model.

5.3 Conceptual clarifications

The concept of "controlled communication", which is central to the work of Burton and his associates, has been rather loosely defined as a technique used by social scientists to control discussions

between representatives of nations and states engaged in conflict. Burton (1969:ix) writes, "The name 'controlled communication' is employed at best to describe what, in practice, took place". This technique shares some features with "casework", the method used by social workers in the treatment of individuals who are in conflict with their environment. It is also similar in some ways to techniques of conciliation and mediation increasingly used in the resolution of industrial and small-group conflicts (Meyer, 1960: 159-165). "While all are similar to the extent that there is an absence of enforcement and an encouragement of 'self-adjusting processes, - 'controlled communication' is intended to describe a technique that has some special features particularly suited to the nature of international and inter-state conflict" (Burton, *passim*).

The concept of "controlled communication" presupposes three separate hypotheses. The first hypothesis is that the conflict behaviour of communities and states "comprises alterable components" such as perception of external conditions, selection of goals from many possible goals, and assessments of values and means in relation to assessments of costs and conflict (Burton, 1969:ix). The second hypothesis is that," since conflicts of interests are essentially subjective, knowledge and experience may alter these components and so produce 'altered relationships.'" The third hypothesis is that," by applying techniques associated with controlled communication (C.C.), misperceptions which parties to a dispute entertain with regard to each other, may be exposed by the introduction of relevant theoretical and empirical knowledge. This in turn may result in the establishment of preconditions for agreement "(Mitchell, 1973:127; De Reuck, 1974:64-65).

As an analytical technique, controlled communication begins from the premise that the conflict behaviour of states and nations is the consequence of certain subjective elements such as perception of external conditions; interpretation of the motivations of the other party; selection of objectives from many possible options; choice of means for pursuing objectives; and evaluation of ends and means in relation to the costs of conflict. "Many of the questions prompted by recent behavioural studies of world politics relate to these variables. These can be dealt with only by analysing the dynamic interface during an actual dispute of perceptions and misperceptions, interpretations and evaluations, and means and ends. Such an interface could best be observed when representative participants of the conflicting power structures are in direct face-to-face interaction"(De Reuck, 1974:64).

As an instrument of conflict resolution, controlled communication has features in common with social "casework" and with the conciliation techniques increasingly employed in terminating industrial and communal conflicts. All have in common the absence of enforcement and the encouragement of processes of 'self-adjustment' and 'reperception.'

Thus, the technique of controlled communication has been used with two different objectives in mind. "Originally it was employed as a means by which an analysis could be made of international and inter-state conflicts. Used in an analytical sense, the most effective procedure would be to select a current conflict (preferably one in which there is actual physical violence) and to create a situation in which the parties involved would expose their perceptions of each other, their motivations and goals, their

internal political problems, and their interpretation of those events which led initially to the conflict and ultimately to its escalation" (Burton, 1969:x). The application of this technique of controlled communication therefore results in a learning process for both the intermediary and the parties to the conflict. For example, the 1965 workshop was a purely academic exercise that had a particular and limited research purpose. "The purpose was neither conciliation nor mediation: its design was not to terminate the conflict although it was hoped that the communication thus established between the parties would prove helpful to them" [12]

It soon became clear, however, "that this particular exercise was of little academic value, but if repeated in the context of other types of conflict, it might lead to insights and hypotheses and perhaps even to means of testing hypotheses. Furthermore, the research experience suggested that a useful technique for the avoidance of conflict, and even for the resolution of conflict even during violence, might have developed. It was thus that the technique came to have a second objective: the resolution of conflict" (Burton, 1969:xi). It is primarily this further development of the technique of controlled communication which will be assessed here.

In Burton's view, concentration on conflict should not direct attention away from the purpose of the study of conflict, which he sees as "a deepening understanding of the nature of politics generally." It is clear that systemic failures arouse more interest than the effective operation of systems. This may be as true of a political or social system as it is of a mechanical one, and may, in part, explain why conflict has attracted interest in

the sphere of social research. It may also account to some extent for the widespread interest of philosophers, historians, and social scientists in conflict." There is, however, a sense in which the study of conflict is a matter of more specialised academic concern. This interest revolves around the operation of the system concerned; the way in which it operates; the reasons why it fails; the methods which can be used to improve its efficiency; and how similarly constructed systems operate" (Burton, 1969:xii). In Burton's view (1969:xii), "The study of conflict is challenging precisely because it requires the investigator to distil, from complexes of ever-changing circumstances, a theoretical paradigm for the understanding of conflict situations."

In practice, the analysis and resolution of conflict cannot easily be conducted separately." The means of resolution are often implicitly suggested by an analysis of the nature of the conflict itself. Means are rigorously related to ends. Resolution frequently tends to depend on the skill and accuracy of analysis. At the same time, analytical skills may be enhanced by the experience of attempting resolution. Science is advanced by application. Knowledge advances when the practitioner is research-oriented, and when the researcher is operationally-minded" (Burton, 1969:xiii).

This 'interconnectedness' between operation and research is not characteristic of the study of international relations.

"Traditionally, interest in international conflict has almost always been purely academic and thus confined to broad issues. Conflicts have indeed been studied but not with a view to resolution. They are studied as a means of understanding the international system in both its peaceful and violent manifestations!" Traditionally

scholars in this field have tended to shy away from the involvement of the practitioner : they have hesitated to examine conflict as it occurs, and have usually preferred to make their analyses only much later when the full corpus of documentation has become available. The purpose of controlled communication "is to provide a clinical framework, and a means by which an applied science of International Relations can develop" (Burton, 1969:xiii). Thus Burton proposes a discipline of international relations, which rests on a clear nexus between theory and praxis.

This does not imply that analysis of conflict is sufficient for purposes of explaining behaviour. Controlled communication rests a great deal upon knowledge of relationships and response of behavioural units other than nations or states. Not only is the method of face-to-face communication drawn from other disciplines, but the features of relationships upon which it focuses attention - perception, responses, feed-back, decision-making - have been examined in other contexts. In Burton's view (1969:xiv), international relations is an 'interdisciplinary field,' and 'the technique of controlled communication is one way of taking advantage of empirical work done in other disciplines.'

Furthermore, general systems theory is more and more integrating the study of International Relations with the study of politics generally, and the study of 'World Society' with the study of any society as a whole as well as with separate aspects of it (Burton, *passim*).

Burton draws a distinction between two concepts, namely 'conflict resolution' and 'conflict settlement.' Conflict resolution is a process that comes from the decision-making of the parties

themselves. It involves a reappraisal of values, alternatives and costs; the appropriate international institution is one of a kind which facilitates this process (Burton, 1969:xvi). Conflict resolution is "a far more complex and comprehensive process than mere conflict settlement. It denotes a process by means of which the sources of the conflict relationship are removed rather than the alteration of behavioural or attitudinal components. It therefore implies an outcome that benefits both parties" (Burton, 1969:233-5). Conflict resolution requires theoretical and practical knowledge and experience of the structure and dynamics of conflict. [13]

"Conflict settlement" or "accommodation", on the other hand, denotes some or other compromise solution which is achieved by "splitting the differences" between parties concerned (Mitchell, 1981:253). Burton has an interest in the former process.

To conclude this discussion on conceptual issues, a few significant points about the nature of conflict need to be emphasised. First, conflict is conceptualised as a social relationship which manifests at different levels of interaction. (Burton uses the term "systems levels".) Secondly, in a structural sense, "conflicts reveal common patterns of behaviour and common sequences in the development and escalation of conflict" (Burton, 1972a:21). Finally, conflict is essentially a subjective phenomenon which takes place when two or more social entities or parties (however defined or structured) "perceive that they entertain mutually incompatible goals" (Mitchell, 1981:17).

After this clarification of how key concepts are used in the Burtonian model of conflict resolution, attention will now be focused on the research setting and application of the technique of controlled communication.

5.4 The research setting

The first attempt to employ the technique of controlled communication took place in London in December 1965. The representatives of three governments were assembled for these preliminary discussions in the presence of a panel of ten academics. The government representatives comprised senior officials accredited by their respective governments as well as other persons nominated by responsible Ministers. Each of the three parties was represented by two participants.

By the end of the first week, officials from two other governments were invited to join the discussions at the suggestion of parties directly involved. The panel consisted of two political scientists professionally engaged in the study of International Relations, three social psychologists, two industrial relations specialists, an international lawyer, a regional historian, and a chairman with extensive experience in the conduct of small meetings. [14]

Preparatory work, apart from a visit to each of the countries concerned and a general study of the relevant problems of each, included the formulation of a set of propositions drawn from that theoretical literature which was deemed 'relevant to the conflict.' These propositions were discussed by a supplementary group of social and political scientists at a specially convened seminar. The purpose of this seminar was to question the relevance and validity of these propositions and to explore ways of modifying them. Although no agenda was prepared, it was hoped that those assembled would be able:

- (a) "to obtain a statement of the situation as perceived by each party, and to obtain elaborations as seemed necessary to satisfy theoretical interests;
- (b) to deduce the general political framework in which the states operated (for example, a fear-framework due to internal tensions and external intervention);
- (c) to direct attention to specific causes of fear, means of removing them, means of promoting a sense of internal and external security;
- (d) to seek from each party, in the light of the theoretical framework that emerged, the requests it would make on others, and on states outside the region, and the steps towards normal relations it would be prepared to take unilaterally, or as part of a reciprocal pattern;
- (e) to make a schedule of these requests, and to examine them to ensure that they dealt with the basic features of the conflict-situation;
- (f) to submit a schedule of requests to all interested parties for their comment;
- (g) to isolate any requests that were unacceptable to others, and re-examine their value to the parties making them, and costs to the parties to which they were made, and to prepare another schedule;
- (h) to continue this process until a wholly agreed schedule was obtained; and
- (i) to invite states concerned to act unilaterally in accordance with this schedule of requests, without further negotiation, agreement or public statement, as from an agreed date"

(Burton, 1969:5-6).

At first this seemed to be a reasonable framework for procedure. In practice the framework was in its requirements too rigid. After the initial sessions, it became apparent that the panel was directing rather than controlling the communication of the parties. (Burton (1969:6) described this development as follows:

" Social psychologists tended quickly to diagnose the root causes of conflict and to impose their models on the basis of group relationships they thought were analogous, the international lawyer was intent upon drafting heads of agreement, and the political scientists tended to divert discussion to the relationships that seemed particularly significant to them. "

It was the common sense and goodwill of the parties concerned, underscored by a genuine desire to solve their problems, which prompted members of the panel to reassess their tactics and alter their approaches. The new procedures adopted as a result of these reconsiderations were 'less formal' and 'less tied to inflexible positions.' As opinions were more and more freely expressed, latent assumptions which were the source of both external and internal conflict, became more and more patent and open to negotiation.

"As this process expanded, the group dynamics involved began to bear strong similarities to those experienced by social and case workers. For example, participants began to assist each other to describe their problems. The perceived intractability of the conflict began to be ameliorated as the problems requiring solution were more and more clearly defined. The discussions reached a point where serious consideration was given to

alternative means of realizing the same goals by various means of cooperation rather than by resorting to conflict (De Reuck, 1974:67).

Reports were made back to diplomatic missions and governments as required. From the end of the first week discussions became less frequent, but communication continued by these means over several months as and when it was considered that some useful purpose might be served thereby.

The first workshop, held in December 1965, which took place in the council room of a medical research foundation in London, was a pilot project. In this study the concept "controlled communication" was introduced to describe the specific technique. Consequently, this workshop served a theoretical purpose since mediation or conflict resolution fell outside its domain.

In 1965, a second workshop was held in London in a university committee room. On this occasion the two conflicting parties were representatives of a communal conflict of international concern : two representatives of the Greek community and two from the Turkish community on the island of Cyprus. The level of representation was similar, the representatives having been nominated by the leaders of the parties in the conflict. Three social scientists from the United States, Professors C.F. Alger, H.C. Kelman and R.C. North, assisted three members of the Centre for the Analysis of Conflict. In this second effort, much more attention was devoted to procedural matters. In particular, 'a more deliberate attempt was made to formulate theoretically derived propositions,' and preliminary discussions took place on the basis

of these (Burton, 1969:8). The propositions derived from the writings of Simmel [15], Coser [16], and work done more recently by Campbell and Le Vine. [17] In addition to this, various other propositions about the nature and dynamics of conflict were generated from work on political systems, communications research, decision-making analysis and other aspects of political studies.

[18]

The second workshop was conducted on the basis of which were distilled from the abovementioned sources. These nine propositions were:

- "(1) The observable trend in world society is towards independence of unitary communities in decision-making. This trend is evident in an insistence on independence from colonialism; for autonomy in states which have achieved independence; and by a determined resistance to foreign influences. Any opposite tendency, such as movements towards stable federal structures or unions, is a development which arises out of a condition where integrated units already possess similar political structures and social values.
- (2) States may be defined as political systems which operate within an environment which is comprised of other systems to which they constantly adapt and respond : "national interests" are never fixed goals, but on the contrary reflect the fluidity of these adaptive processes.
- (3) Since states which are not directly involved in a conflict value their independence, they usually prefer to see conflicting parties arrive at a settlement in a voluntary way rather than to see a settlement imposed upon the parties

from without. In such circumstances their agreements still attract a more general support provided that the parties involved have taken into account the legitimate interests of others.

- (4) Law and order as maintained by colonial or foreign rule consolidates conflict situations, inhibits the flow of adjustments between communities, and thus creates situations of open conflict once authority is withdrawn.
- (5) The necessary conditions of law and order motivate colonial administrations to enlist the support of élites. These, because of their official positions and foreign support, tend to move away from and lose touch with the very people whom they purportedly represent and govern, and this results in an increase of tension between the colonial administration and the people as well as between the élites and the people themselves.
- (6) When the colonial authority deliberately employs members of a particular faction for police or administrative duties because of their greater loyalty or special abilities, this faction will, because of their position, become identified with the administration in situations where the administration has to cope with civil unrest or increasing pressures for independence. Under these circumstances, this faction will be identified with the administration and communal conflict and will consequently be generated where none previously existed. Such communal conflict is more than likely to be exacerbated during the processes of transfer of power, and, in all probability, will outlast the hostilities associated with the attainment of independence.

- (7) Leadership interests are often motivated to make statements which aggravate conflict and to perform actions which increase the intensity of conflict. In some situations, political leaders may actually find it expedient to maintain a level of conflict by artificially contriving situations and disseminating inflammatory propaganda as a bulwark against the erosion of support.
- (8) A settlement of a conflict does not necessarily imply its resolution : resolution may depend upon the implementation of long-term integrative policies. [18]
- (9) Parties to a conflict should not be required to compromise (Burton, 1969:10-11). Compromise in Burton's view, does not address the underlying sources of a conflict relationship. The aim should be resolution not settlement."

The level of tension and the evident hostility between the disputing parties was much greater at the beginning of these discussions than had been the case in the previous experience, but proceedings developed along similar lines."Misperceptions, false interpretations of official statements, prejudice between national groups, unrealistic expectations about the policies of other states, and other such relevant causes of misunderstanding were all ultimately revealed. Research findings relevant to conflict, conflict dynamics and conflict regulation were implemented with much greater effect than had been in the case in the previous exercise " (Burton,1969:11).

These experiences generated various hypotheses about the nature of conflict and also about processes of conflict resolution. Subsequent to the main negotiations, discussions were held for the

purpose of attempting to explain the objectives and procedures of the workshop. It is to the results of these discussions that we now turn.

5.4.1 Methodology and procedures

In the Burtonian model, conflict analysis and resolution necessitate the pursuance of a particular set of procedures and a specific methodology. These procedures and related methodology will now be briefly outlined.

The first important step posited by the model is that conflict analysis and resolution should begin with an identification of the parties in relation to the issues that are in dispute between them.

The identification of the parties to a conflict might, prima facie, seem to be a relatively straightforward procedure, and one that has traditionally been followed in more traditional approaches to the peaceful resolution of conflict. Whenever there is a conflict there must be, by definition, parties to it. In practice, however, this is rarely a simple matter. Observers have tended to think of it in this way "because of the frequency of descriptive accounts of conflicts which all too readily appear to be able to identify the parties on each side" (Mitchell, 1969:2-4). The deduction which can plausibly be made from the ready identification of disputing parties is that the termination of an international conflict depends upon agreement between the two parties or states in conflict." But this is both simplistic and misleading. Parties to a conflict are hardly ever equally involved, nor are they necessarily concerned with the same issues. No solution can

therefore be found which would equally satisfy all the parties involved"(Burton, 1969:11). For purposes of analysis and resolution, each 'subdispute' requires separate treatment.

There are, furthermore, different 'subsets' of disputes within the scope of one conflict. Recent approaches to the study of international relations have demonstrated the degree to which international conflict is frequently a side effect of internal or communal conflict (Cot, 1972:31-39). From this perspective, the local dispute becomes a matter of international concern. The South African situation provides good supportive evidence for this hypothesis.

Apart from the identification of the parties to the conflict, a further procedure is required for analysis and resolution. This relates to the identification of what Burton calls 'systems levels.' It is assumed that conflict should be resolved at one level before there can be resolution at other levels. In the Burtonian model, the concept of "system" helps to clarify the nature of the problem as a whole as well as the disputes which comprise it. "Systems are transactions between units of the same set" (Burton, 1969:18). For example, in the case of the communal conflict in Cyprus, the two communities constituted one 'set' while the governments of Greece and Turkey constituted another.

"Transactions which are most numerous, intimate and intractable always occur at the local level." Eruptions in the sphere of this type of conflict cause conflicts on a higher level while resolution of conflicts in this sphere result in corresponding resolutions of broader conflicts. Therefore, any settlement "arrived at by other governments at other systems levels

and imposed at the local level does not necessarily, and in practice is unlikely to, restore transactions at the local level" (Burton, 1969:19). [20]

This general proposition requires further clarification. In the case of North and South Korea, for example, the division of these two areas caused a cessation of previous transactions but established new ones, and this, in turn, created new 'systems.' Parts of these new systems would be destroyed by reunification. The Korean case illustrates the general point that when a conflict leads to a severance of transactions, the resolution of conflict is less dependent upon resolution at local 'systems levels.'

The general proposition is, therefore, that the starting point of both analysis and resolution of conflict is at the systems level of 'highest interaction.' A settlement imposed from other levels could occur, as, for example, when one party is militarily defeated by the other. This might even result in resolution, but only after a sufficiently long period of time and by procedures which could ensure the severance of past transactions and the building of new systems. Presumably this is what the United States of America sought to achieve in Vietnam in preference to resolution on the basis of negotiations at the local level.

The concept of systems or transactions serves two useful purposes in the Burtonian model. "Firstly, it helps to demonstrate the options in a given situation as well as the various problems involved in resolution by re-establishing transactions at local levels, and secondly, settlement or resolution by creating new systems" (Burton, 1969:19).

In more traditional methods of conflict resolution such as diplomatic intervention, the tendency has been to perceive an unjustifiable solidarity between states who represent one party to a conflict while the assumption has been that each party to a conflict constitutes a unified entity in which each of its members entertain similar perceptions about the dispute in question. It has also been assumed that the interests of a state in an alliance, or of a state acting on its own, can be represented by the government of that state, and that agreements entered into will be duly observed.

It is usually true (apart from qualifications set out below) that once violence erupts and the security of the state is threatened, there is an increase in internal cohesion and unity. In such circumstances, determination to survive usually outweighs all other considerations. Burton (1969:20), however, disputes the view that states are unified in their values or can ever be completely represented by their respective governments. In reality states in conflict situations are hardly ever internally unified.

[21] Even at their best, "governments are never wholly legitimised." On the contrary they are often representative of minority interests. Under these circumstances it is essential to analyse and come to grips with the divisions within parties to a conflict.

Burton (1969:20-21) comments as follows:

"It follows that there cannot be resolution of conflict and a stable condition unless there is a high degree of internal unity of purpose, and even then instability or rejection of agreements can occur through changes in values and interests. It also follows that the origins of conflict, those interests and values the state is pursuing or defending, may not be the interests and values of groups or factions within states, and perhaps not even the interests and values of majorities".

Burton and his associates also postulate that conflict avoidance is possible only "when means are found by which interests and values can be assessed by the parties with "full knowledge" of the costs of conflict in relation to the values being pursued, and of interests and values being destroyed by it." Divisions within parties are perceived as an important cause of the escalation of conflict. While the aggressive and provocative statements of one party justify the actions of another, an escalation of a more serious conflict is initiated which was initially not much more than a domestic struggle for economic and social reform or even just for party political power. In due course, however, this escalated conflict exacerbates internal divisions and costs in relation to values become correspondingly clearer.

Consideration of 'unit integration' directs attention to the issues within a conflict that require attention. Burton advances the proposition that a resolution of conflict between two parties cannot be superimposed upon unresolved and continuing conflicts within them. Problems of party or unit integration arise out of 'alienation,' of 'participation in decision-making,' of 'leadership and élite interests.'

The strength of controlled communication is that it "is based on face-to-face discussion in which participants are compelled to clarify their thinking, and more importantly, in which they are forced to arrive at a recognition of the fact that the conflict relates to internal problems on both sides." In Burton's view (1969:23), the roots of conflict probably do not reside in the international system : "they may be located within the decision-making processes of the parties themselves." This proposition is

based on his earlier proposition that international conflict is usually a side effect of domestic conflict.

After the Burtonian model has identified the parties to the conflict, clarified the levels of interaction at which the conflict manifests itself, and dealt with the problem of divisions within parties themselves, it then proceeds to an identification of the issues in conflict.

Burton and his associates assert that it cannot be assumed "that issues identified by parties to be those in dispute are necessarily those at the root of conflict." Insofar as the origins of conflict are to be found within states, and to the extent that other states become involved, the issues are quite likely to be both "misstated and confused" (Burton, 1969:23-24). In many conflicts, no clear view exists of what the issues in question really are.

There are various reasons why this is so quite apart from the usual absence of analytical separation between parties and issues. "First, the issues which give rise to the conflict may not be clear to the parties themselves. Secondly, whatever the issues originally were, they tend to become distorted and obscured as conflict escalates. Finally, events that ultimately lead to open conflict are usually only triggers of conflict and not the underlying reasons for the conflict." [22]

In practice the issues relevant to the resolution of conflict require an analysis of the motivations and perceptions of the parties involved, and part of the purpose of controlled communication is to identify them.

The methodology employed is to isolate issues in broad terms

so as to be able to separate them according to 'systems level.' Issues and parties need to be "carefully matched." The real issues, however, are not always immediately apparent. The parties involved in an unstructured discussion themselves determine some issues, while others may be identified as a result of questions from the third party.

The parties invited to discuss their conflicts in a controlled communication setting are those that in each case appeared to be the ones most concerned with transactions affected or disrupted by the conflicts, but who were not necessarily those expending the greatest resources in the conflict situation or those who might have claimed to have a direct interest in the conflict.

In Burton's experience even the parties that were invited to participate were found not to be unified: "they included factions with different values and interests, and discussion of these differences was frequently relevant." In some cases, it may indeed prove impossible in practice to identify parties to a conflict. In some cases, for example, leaders of some of the parties involved may be in detention or in other ways unavailable - as was the case in Rhodesia before events culminated in the Lancaster House Agreement.

Since the issues determine the parties to a conflict, the identification of the issues comprising the conflict will logically lead to the problem of the representativeness of the parties involved. If there is to be negotiation between parties to a dispute, the parties must necessarily be capable of being legitimately represented. "There can be no negotiation with a party that is so diverse in its values, interests, goals and strategies as to be unable to agree about representatives" (Burton, 1969:40).

Even if there is a basic unity within the parties concerned, the identification of persons who represent the views, attitudes and interests of each individual party is no more straightforward than the identification of parties themselves." Even recognized political leaders do not necessarily or always represent the views of their governments in their private or public statements. They frequently speak to different audiences in different terms; they adopt bargaining positions, and they even sometimes endeavour to deny the very existence of policies for which they are directly responsible" (Burton, 1969:40).

If negotiations are to result in a satisfactory and permanent resolution, representatives should not only represent in a constitutional sense : they should also reflect the opinions, and even be in a position to authorize the future and changes in policy of those whom they represent. [23]

The concept of systems levels is clearly relevant to the identification of representatives. For example, when an internal or communal conflict has extended to include foreign parties, a representative cannot be a spokesman - both for the internal faction and for the foreign party which supports it. Different interests are involved. "In the final analysis, systems levels, parties, issues and representatives should all be relevant to each other" (Burton, 1969:41).

Once the representatives of the parties have been established, the actual selection of representatives can take place. In most problem-solving workshops, the representatives of governments have been nominated by the head of state or by a responsible minister. It is only at this level that a decision can

be taken as to whether a meeting may take place with other parties to a conflict. For purposes of controlled communication, however, "the representatives of parties may be persons, official or unofficial, who are (in the view of the responsible and representative leaders) adequately aware of the attitudes and policies of their respective governments"(Burton, 1969:41).

Since controlled communication is an essentially exploratory stage prior to negotiation between parties, the purpose of which is to reveal underlying causes of conflict, "it may effectively be conducted at lower decision-making levels, provided, of course, there is the requisite communication with decision-makers as and when required"(Burton, 1969:42; De Reuck, 1974:68; Mitchell, 1973:123-132).

Burton and his associates claim that there are distinct advantages in working with people not directly involved in decision-making since they have more freedom (than politicians) to explore, to discuss, critically to examine their stereotypes, and generally to stand back from the situation to look analytically at the responses of their respective political leaders.

Controlled communication is based on the assumption that "conflict avoidance and resolution are possible by bringing about altered perceptions, by offering different interpretations of behaviour and changed assessment of values and costs, and by drawing attention to options not previously contemplated."If this is to happen at all, the flexibility of participants involved is essential. Politicians who have personally declared their positions, and whose reactions and perceptions are the subject of

analysis, would naturally tend to react much more defensively than lower-level representatives.

'Progressive education' of participants is important - especially in 'the arts of being open-minded and open to persuasion.' The procedure of controlled communication depends for its success "on the absence of any fixed commitment in the nurturing of relationships which do not create the psychological necessity for such inflexibility" (Burton, 1969:42; Burton, 1972a:17; De Reuck, 1974:68).

According to the Burtonian view, the advantages of representatives at the official level is greater at the stage at "which functional cooperation is being discussed" - a stage reached once communication has effectively been 'controlled.' "Politicians and other officials, ipso facto, in an authoritative position to select between options made available after they have been worked out in detail by subordinates and after areas of functional cooperation have been identified and discussed at some length" (Burton, 1969:43). Commitment in this sense therefore only materializes at a much later stage in the negotiation process and is not required at the outset.

Once the parties have been identified and their representatives confirmed, the next important procedural step relates to the communication between such representatives and their principals.

The role of a representative of a party is reasonably clear and obvious when analysis of conflict is the sole objective of controlled communication. His function is to convey the viewpoints of those he represents, even though he may not agree with them

entirely and even though he may change his own views during the process of communication with the opposing party. If, however, one of the purposes of the exercise is the resolution of conflict which can only occur if the participant is open to a radical reassessment of both the situation and the motivations of the opposing party, "he has to perform an additional and far more complex function" (Burton, 1969:45). When confronted by the necessity for resolution, "the representative might have to communicate a revised approach to his superiors; to delineate sources of misperception; and to supply evidence of inappropriate response to those very people (his superiors) who will have had as yet no direct exposure to the parties concerned" (Burton, *passim*). In such cases the representative may find himself being accused of being disloyal or "brain-washed" and of adopting attitudes and views which are at variance with accepted national policies and community consensus.

The Burtonian model provides for specific ways in which the transmission of altered perceptions may be facilitated. These include:

- (1) Working with representatives who are experienced in the techniques of controlled communication.
- (2) Having more than one representative for each party. Numbers, however, may be a problem. Ideally, there should not be more than twelve to fifteen participants involved.
- (3) The transmission of frequent reports on the conflict in question may be helpful but there is also a potential disadvantage in this : discussions may become too academic.
- (4) Having access to decision-makers. This is of vital importance (Burton, 1969:45-47).

The crucial factor in the Burtonian model of conflict analysis and resolution is the establishment of communication and, once this has been achieved, the control of communication. For example, in the South African context this would imply that 'meaningful' communication between the ruling party and all the significant political groupings, including the African National Congress (ANC), should be established. It is to these interrelated aspects that we now turn.

Communication is the essence of all social relationships. In human relationships, communication normally comprises messages and transactions. "There can, however, be communication even in the absence of messages and transactions as when, for example, various groups of the same nationality or religion in different parts of the world are aware of and have 'sympathy' for each other but no direct contact" (Burton, 1969:48). Pertinent examples are the widely dispersed Jewish communities of the world; various people of colour who commonly experience widespread prejudices; or religious or ideological groups who are separated by geographical and political barriers.

"Whether communication makes for harmonious or for conflicting relationships depends upon its content and perceptions of its content" (Burton, 1969:49). (Own emphasis)

The practice of the technique of controlled communication is based on two fundamental hypotheses. The first is that conflict occurs as a result of ineffective communication and that "its resolution must therefore necessarily involve processes by which communication can be made to be effective" (Burton, 1969:49; De Reuck, 1974:70-71). Burton (1969:49) defines "effective communication" as "... the deliberate conveying and accurate

receipt and interpretation of what was intended, and the full employment of information as received and stored in the allocation and re-allocation of values, interests and goals".

The second hypothesis is that the deployment of the technique of controlled communication rests on the assumption that "conflict of interests is a subjective component which occurs when conditions exist that prevent accurate assessments of costs and values, and consideration of alternative means and goals" (Burton, 1968:7; 1969:50).

Burton argues that if conflict is caused by the aggressiveness or expansionist tendencies of states, and if power relations determine the nature and structure of the international system, "then the settlement of conflict can only be mediated by third-party intervention, enforcement of a settlement, or by the military defeat of one party by another." Given such a point of view, each state will endeavour to impose its will on another by negotiating a peace settlement after defeat or in circumstances in which defeat is acknowledged.

Under such circumstances, effective communication would not constitute part of the process of terminating conflict : "communication could not take place until one or other side were to concede defeat. But if conflict between states is based on misperceptions, false calculation of costs, failure to perceive alternative means of attaining goals and similar behavioural factors, it follows that each party to a conflict gains from the resolution of a conflict." Consequently, "effective communication can be relevant even while active hostilities are in process" (Burton, 1969:50). These are two different sets of assumptions and correspondingly imply different means of conflict resolution.

Effective communication, as previously defined, depends on two key variables, namely :

- (i) "whether it is intentional or unintentional - designed to convey information accurately or to mislead; and
- (ii) whether it is correctly perceived, or misperceived."

Both these variables are in turn influenced by the form of communication whether, for example, it is verbal or visual, direct or indirect, and by the circumstances in which it takes place (whether, for example, in conditions of fear or of security, or with the possession of accurate information or on the basis of prejudice).

Burton distinguishes between two types of political communication at interstate level. The first type is 'diplomacy' - direct and indirect. Diplomacy takes place within a power framework. The second type of interstate communication relates to 'the use of power and threats as a basis for communication.' This is an ancient method of communication, but, in Burton's opinion, one which is inefficient and which leads to misinformation.

The basic hypothesis that underlies Burton and his associates' model of conflict resolution, and the notion of controlled communication, "is that conflict and ineffective communication are casually linked" (Burton, 1969:52). A corollary hypothesis is also advanced, namely : "Since the resolution of conflict depends upon effective communication, it can only come from the parties themselves" (Burton, 1969:55; Burton, 1972a:5-29).

After this brief outline of the key hypotheses which underlie the technique of controlled communication, the technique for the establishment and control of such communication will now be analysed at some length.

The establishment of effective communication between conflicting parties may often be inhibited by fear that "the initiatives of one party will be perceived as an actual or implicit admission of weakness or defeat by the other party." The Burtonian model posits that some procedural means exist for overcoming some of these initial difficulties, and that these can be applied to third-party intervention and to formal and secret communication between contending parties (Burton, 1969:56). These include, in logical order : sending invitations to participants and informing officials about this; explanation of the technique of controlled communication to participants; personal visits to the decision-maker(s) concerned. Available insights into the decision-making process are then utilised on a comparative basis,"especially with reference to information flow, information blockage, overloading, the role and influence of individual prejudice, stereo-types and mirror images"(Burton, 1969:59). [24] Propositions and questions can then be drafted and discussed in advance by the panel of experts. This will ensure that the greatest possible use is made of the exercise.

Burton and his associates have been strongly influenced by the writings of Jervis on misperception and mirror images in international relations. [25]

De Reuck (1974:64-80) provides a fairly detailed description of the establishment and control of communication. Burton himself (1969) supplies only a limited amount of information about these two processes. The discussion which follows is therefore based mainly on the work of De Reuck. In the two workshops,"the seating was deliberately unplanned as a gesture of informality, but the

contending parties seated themselves so as to avoid eye-to-eye contact with their rivals." The participants met for six hours of discussion each day, with breaks for coffee, lunch and tea, which the parties and panel took together. During these breaks, smaller groups could meet informally and this often resulted in a noticeable diminishment of tension. The panel met every night to review the day's proceedings. The parties retired to their respective embassies to do the same.

From the outset "it was the intention to exploit all previous experience of unstructured meetings and to employ the insights of small group theory in conducting the proceedings." [26] For this reason, minimum guidance on procedure was given beforehand and no agenda or other papers were prepared - in order to raise as few expectations as possible in the participants. Because there were no direct precedents to guide them, the panel had no advantage over the parties when attempting to visualize the future course of events. They had to improvise and make the most of whatever experience they gained as they went along.

"An atmosphere of seclusion seemed desirable and so the meetings were made as intimate and informal as possible. The meeting opened with short greetings and assurances that the proceedings would be kept confidential and informal." Each member in turn then introduced himself and his field of work or study. Each of the representative parties was then invited to present, "for however long he needed, an account of his people's perception of the situation." The remainder of each of the first two days was thereafter devoted to frank and detailed statements by the parties of their respective points of view. At times the atmosphere was

fraught with emotion."The panel offered no comments and intervened only to ask questions. The panel also never pressed for more information than participants were willing to give, but occasionally they attempted to elicit information which was not recognized by the parties as relevant"(De Reuck, 1974:67).

The panel then became actively involved and at this point 'the level of tension between the two parties immediately dropped.' The third day"was devoted to analytical reformulations and various aspects of the situation in the light of political and sociological theory. Without the use of academic jargon, and with minimal reference to the Cyprus dispute which was under discussion, the panel discussed such matters as misperception, stereotypes, tunnel vision and mirror images, cognitive dissonance, defensive reactions to perceived hostility, self-fulfilling prophecies, escalation, and the influence of reference groups, and all these concepts were illustrated by reference to a variety of other conflict situations. The parties accepted the relevance of this framework of ideas to the other conflicts cited, but insisted nevertheless on the unique characteristics of their own dispute."

By the fourth day, however, "common perceptions, a shared vocabulary, and feelings of mutual confidence were becoming established."On the fifth day a problem-solving phase was entered "in which earnest efforts were made by the parties to consolidate their gains in understanding and to seek grounds of agreement" (De Reuck, 1974:67).

Before discussing the procedures and tactics of control, some observations should be made about the role of third parties : in Burton's case, a panel of political and social scientists.

A great deal has already been written about this subject, especially in the context of more traditional techniques of settlement. In his seminal study of third-party intervention, Oran Young (1967) analyses the various roles of third parties. These roles range from 'intervention' in order to enforce an agreement, to the 'exercise of influence' on a problem. Young (1967) also outlines important functions of the third party in any mediation role, whether the dispute be industrial or international. He outlines functions that are especially relevant to international mediation, "including data collection and processing, and verification of statements"(Young, 1967:47-79). Young's exposition of the functions and tactics required in the traditional role of the mediator seems to be most useful for the purposes of this discussion.

The role of third-party intervention in controlled communication is different from the type of mediation described by Young. In one sense mediation in controlled communication is less active : "its function is not to persuade, verify the accuracy of statements, or to be a judge of the reasonableness of any argument. But in another sense, it is far more active, and this is the distinctive difference."The third-party in controlled communication is there to explain conflict, its origins, its escalation - sometimes by reference to other conflicts, sometimes by analytical means, but always within the context of continuing discussion between the parties"(Burton, 1969:61-62).

Burton (1969:62) writes :

"The main differences in function of the third-party arise out of the difference in objective. Traditional mediation seeks agreement by compromises, or by persuading the parties

that their best interests would be served by ceasing violence and arriving at a settlement. It is a negotiated framework. Controlled communication on the other hand, endeavours to establish a condition in which the parties see their relationships as posing a problem to be solved. Neither side is more right than the other or wrong than the other...

The role of the third party is to establish a condition in which all the parties join with it in defining, identifying and solving the problem".

The above exposition of the role of the third party outlines certain specific requirements which must be fulfilled by the third party if it is to be effective in the context of controlled communication. Burton (1969:63-64) specifies four of these qualifications as follows :

- (1) "Panel members should be ignorant of the situation in the sense of having made no prior study of the situation and having no partisan attitude towards the situation under discussion."

Although there are well-founded psychological reasons why resolution of a conflict should come from the parties themselves and not be imposed or suggested by any third parties, there are also reasons which relate to analysis.

"It is only the parties that can point to the relevant issues as they perceive them : the conflict is at least in part a perceived relationship, and only the parties can describe and explain some aspects of it" (Burton, 1969:63).

- (2) "Panel members should be political and social scientists who have worked extensively in the fields of conflict, including related areas of decision-making, perception, deterrence, escalation, and functionalism."

Burton asserts somewhat unfairly that, diplomats, journalists, historians and others usually do not have this kind of academic background and can therefore make no effective contribution in this context. The role of the third party is to make available a corpus of specialized knowledge which is of practical use in the process of negotiation but of which the negotiators would normally be ignorant.

- (3) "Panel members who constitute the third party should neither impose theoretical explanations nor suggest political solutions."

- (4) "Panel members should possess the ability to empathize and identify with both parties. This is an essential requirement." Burton's experience has been that political scientists with a "systems perspective" find it easier to identify in this way. [27]

Mitchell (1981:77) provides a useful summary of the functions of third parties in the context of a problem-solving workshop. He notes the following functions :

- (a) "Supportive, in that they require that the 'outsider' assist the client by offering sympathetic understanding towards the client's dilemma, and confidence in the latter's ability to find a solution eventually.

- (b) Non-directive, in that the initiative for approaching the outside caseworker is often in the sole control of the client, and also in that the outsider does not impose any solution or 'cure', but assists the client to work out a desirable response according to the client's own perceived needs.
- (c) Non-condemnatory, in that the caseworker offers no reactions to the client's behaviour in terms of right and wrong, or of approval or disapproval according to moral standards.
- (d) Self-determinate, in that the search for acceptable solutions is largely in the hands of the client, the caseworker merely helping to bring about some adjustment between the client and his total environment, according to the perceived needs of the client, rather than the needs of the environment, some set of externally imposed rules or the caseworker himself.
- (e) Analytical, in that part of the basic case-work approach is the clarifying of the client's perception of his actual situation, by helping him to see more clearly the nature of 'outer' reality and his own relationship to it."

Before the actual process of controlled communication begins to take place, some preliminary arrangements are made. Burton and his associates found it useful to conduct a seminar before a workshop actually began with the academic panel and any other scholars who might be interested. Propositions were then formulated that appeared to be relevant to the situation : comparable conflict situations were discussed; and the main questions which needed to be asked were listed."The effectiveness of controlled communication

is frequently proportionate to the degree to which the panel can expose, bring to bear and utilize relevant knowledge in the presence of the negotiators, and so preparation along these lines is essential."

Preliminary arrangements are also made with regard to seating. The party on the left of the chairman is often unconsciously perceived to be the one discriminated against. Both parties must be in a position to focus on the chairman or on active members of the panel and must also be able to avoid the embarrassment, in the early stages, of talking across the table to the opposing party. Yet both parties must be able to talk directly when they feel free to do so.

" There is no agenda. The purpose of the meeting should be made clear in the invitation, and is then further clarified by the chairman's introductory remarks. The parties are invited at a very early stage in the proceedings to describe the conflict as they see it. Official presentations of the case, replete with accusations and counter-accusations, then follow."

After these expositions are complete (this normally takes up at least one day), questions are asked by panel members and by the parties (De Reuck, 1974:67; Mitchell, 1973:124).

When these important preliminary arrangements have been completed, the actual process of control of communication may begin.

The strategies of control used in the Burtonian model "resemble those of the clinical psychoanalyst, the caseworker, the industrial psychologist and the family counsellor. They take for granted the existence of stereotypes and fixations." Burton (1969:68-69), comments as follows :

"The experience of the caseworker, and the 'supportive' approach of the caseworker, are most relevant; caseworkers have had to face the problems involved when identification with a party is essential, when approval is necessary of actions within the context of their enactment, while still maintaining the objectivity that is needed to ask the appropriate question or to make the leading comment".

For the effective control of communication, "the international analyst requires many of the same techniques, especially those used for reducing the level of tension in the interviewee; for helping the respective parties to focus on the central issues; for assisting parties to make difficult admissions; for breaking down defence mechanisms; and for influencing the judgement of the parties involved."

In the view of Burton and his associates, "clarification, the generation of insights into the position of each party by the opposing one, correction of perceptions, explanation of international processes of interactions, all seem to require the techniques, skills and experience of the caseworker"(De Reuck, 1974: 68-69).

The techniques of psychoanalysis, psychotherapy, group therapy and resolution of conflict between parties to disputes all have much in common. One of the most important common factors in all these techniques is that the third party provides a frame of reference. Third parties should never indulge in evaluation of the various positions taken by the conflicting parties. For example, "the panel should not make pronouncements as to whether behaviour is right or wrong, legal or illegal, just or unjust, defensive or aggressive"(Burton, 1969:70).

The entire concept of controlled communication rests on the assumption that conflict is not an analogy of an economic struggle for scarce resources, in which gain implies loss by another; "rather it is based on the assumption that analysis will reveal, after perceptions have been duly corrected, that neither side may be required to compromise and that solutions may be found in terms of which all conflicting parties may ultimately gain" (Burton, *passim*).

The basic assumption is that a conflict relationship contains "alterable components" such as perception.

The third party (in Burton's case a panel of social scientists), fulfil specific functions in situations of controlled communication.

These functions are :

- (1) to provide a framework for the analysis of conflict;
- (2) to supply theoretical inputs; and
- (3) to show (to the parties involved) that their particular conflict is not unique (and thus not less susceptible to analysis and resolution than has already been the case with other resolved conflicts). "The panel refers constantly to other situations that have similar characteristics, for example, long-standing communal conflicts, traditional antagonisms, colonial histories, and experiences that relate to third party intervention" (Burton, 1969:71).

In the experience of Burton and his associates, the basic and most specific techniques of control for achieving their purposes are those calculated to promote abstract discussion of the concrete situation. "Abstract models help parties to observe the

basis of conflict and in particular to discern the processes and effects of escalation"(Burton, 1969:72) (author's own emphasis).

One of the main objectives of controlled communication is to make the parties aware of the processes of perception and their relationship to conflict. De Reuck (1974:70) sees this as the rationale behind controlled communication when he writes :

"The proximate aim of controlled communication is to help the parties to redefine their situation so that both parties perceive it as a joint predicament, jointly to be solved, and to provide them with a common language for communication : it is in short, to enable the parties to create for themselves a common universe of discourse".

The chief means of control relate to an understanding of perception and to the establishment of "true" and "false" inferences. The exercise amounts to "reperception", "...and there can be no reperception in the absence of a realisation that different perceptions are possible" (Burton, 1969:73).

Control depends to a large extent upon an understanding by the participants of the reasons for their attitudes and responses and upon the realisation that there is a possibility of harbouring false perception. If circumstances permit, some demonstration of visual perceptions is usually attempted. [28] The initial problem in controlled communication is to demonstrate that these mirror images exist (a favourable image of itself and unfavourable one of the other party). "The important point is that both sides must realize for themselves that their perceptions and interpretations may indeed be false"(Burton, 1969:74; De Reuck, 1974:70).

Apart from the process of "reperception", the intensity of communication is gradually enhanced by introducing appropriate

models of the conflict being discussed at well-timed stages during the proceedings.

Models of this kind are utilized in order to suggest explanations and to imply possible solutions. A model of a communal conflict, for example, might suggest the need for a federal structure in which one legislature passes laws which provide for common needs while separate legislatures take care of the ethnic or group needs in a multi-ethnic community. Clearly, there is a danger inherent in this procedure : the panel might easily become both evaluative and prescriptive by making suggestions which ideally should emanate from the parties themselves. Burton (1969:84) stresses that model building should develop out of the discussion and should not be a forum in which the scholars present introduce their own preferred options. The need for just "the right mix of balance, flexibility and timing is vital since it is part of the function of panel members to introduce new information and ideas into the total situation." But the models should never be introduced in such a way that the conflicting parties sense that they are being pressurized by the panel." Solutions should always ultimately arise out of the discussions themselves".

Once control has been effectively established and once models have been proposed and discussed which explain important aspects of the conflict to the mutual satisfaction of the parties, then the next stage is to explore areas of functional and regional cooperation as a preliminary step towards a possible solution.

Let us first take a closer look at the concept of functional cooperation.

'Functional cooperation' may be considered in three different contexts. "First, there are those areas of investigation relevant to the analysis of conflict which require cooperation between the parties. Secondly, there are functional activities which are necessary if conflict is not to reoccur. These invariably relate to suspected sources or bases of conflict. In a communal conflict, for example, it is necessary to determine the critical levels of minorities, and where such minorities exist. It is also necessary to establish the relationship between ethnic conflict and levels of poverty. The third context in which functional cooperation is necessary is in the definition of common aims, the realization of alternative means of achieving existing objectives, and the evolution of institutional means of cooperation" (Burton, 1969:90; Burton, 1972a:27).

'Regional cooperation' offers a framework in which negotiation of functional cooperation may take place. By "regionalism", Burton (1969:95) means "cooperation, whether or not formally structured, between all states within a defined area (excluding any states outside that area) in all matters of inter-state interest". In Burton's opinion, SEATO and similar defence pacts are not regional arrangements : they include states which are outside the region and are essentially 'outward-looking' since their very *raison d'être* is to oppose states in the same or in other regions. For Burton, regional arrangements must by definition be 'inward-looking'; they should only be concerned with the interests of the states in the region.

Burton's views about regionalism have been strongly influenced by the writing of Russett (1967) [29], and Yalem. [30]

For Burton and his associates, both 'functional' and 'regional cooperation' provide a first step toward the eventual resolution or termination of conflict. The difference is between, on one hand, attempting to construct an imaginative compromise which will protect the interests of all the parties concerned, and, on the other hand, permitting parties to work together and so create whatever structure will be appropriate. As an example of this kind of cooperation Burton (1972a:27) cites the case of Greek and Turkish Cypriots who share common needs such as electricity, water supplies, communications, and so on. At the same time, they possess their own distinctive cultural identities and interests. Each group, therefore, has its own set of loyalties, but these separate loyalties are not an insuperable barrier to communal and political cooperation.

Suggested "solutions" will always fail to determine an agreed line of demarcation since no obvious ones exist. But functional cooperation in areas such as education, tourism, and development are possible. The usual experience is that it is impossible to superimpose structures on different cultural and regional groups, but that the provision of common needs within a centralised administration is acceptable. At present, for example, most education planning done by Greeks takes little account of Turkish needs, while control of tourism and development are also in Greek hands. Nevertheless, divisions are being consolidated.

In the Burtonian model, the promotion of functional cooperation is the positive step which is undertaken by the third party once the analysis has been completed, once, that is, conditions have become favourable to a functional approach. It is

not practical for the third party merely to leave the conflicting parties to their own devices in this regard. Their relationships are still actively influenced by mutual distrust." There is, furthermore, an absence of legitimate machinery for consultation." The role of the third party does not end after analysis has been completed and controlled communication is established : this stage is merely the precondition for further activities by means of which new relationships and institutions should emerge.

Burton also pays limited attention to "conflict avoidance" which he describes as "a more challenging objective because it involves prediction" (Burton, 1969:100). Conflict avoidance is "of two different kinds : one refers to probable or anticipated conflicts; the other is concerned with the maintenance of harmonious relationships between parties who are already cooperating in a close working relationship and who do not anticipate the emergence of new conflicts"(Burton, 1969:101).

To conclude this part of the discussion, it should be stressed that the primary purpose of controlled communication is "to bring into high relief"the nature of relations existing between parties in conflict, and by this means,"to adduce an analogy to the state of world society"(Burton, 1969:131). For Burton, controlled communication may be construed as a 'logical paradigm' of approaches to the study of international relations, and secondly, "to the appropriate handling and analysis of conflict in that sphere." Controlled communication is therefore representative of one particular approach to the study of international relations among a variety of others such as the historical approach, the philosophical approach, the institutional/legal approach, the systems approach, and general theorising.

The philosophical basis of controlled communication posits that not all conflict necessarily eventuates in violence and war. In addition, although it might be demonstrated that 'world society' always contains within itself the potential for war, it does not necessarily follow that 'world society' should remain in this condition. Indeed, it has been suggested [31] that a condition of "anarchy" is "one common to every society before it evolves into a community in which common values are shared". In this regard, Burton (1969:180) comments as follows :

"The technique of controlled communication is a direct challenge to the assumption that international society is always in a condition of conflict because of irreconcilable differences in interests among states. The hypothesis is that conflict, like all relationships, is a subjective condition capable of alteration, and that avoidance and resolution of conflict are possible by wholly non-coercive means".

Having outlined the domain assumptions which underlie the Burtonian model of controlled communication, the research setting within which the model was applied, as well as its methodology and procedures, we shall now attempt a critical assessment of its strengths and weaknesses.

5.5 Critique

From an analytical point of view, the basic procedural and methodological aspects of the Burtonian model of conflict resolution may be presented as follows :

BASIC METHODOLOGICAL STEPS IN BURTON'S MODEL

- Step 1 Identification of issues and parties.
(Issues define the parties which need to be representative.)
- Step 2 Establishment of communication between parties.
(Special techniques are applied.)
- Step 3 Control of communication.
(Modelling of conflict.)
- Step 4 Identification of areas of functional/regional cooperation.
(This is done primarily by the parties themselves with the assistance of a third party.)
- Step 5 Conflict resolution.
(Also conflict avoidance.)

This schematic outline of the procedural and methodological steps in the Burtonian model indicates some common features with the problem-solving workshop as previously discussed. As one finds in these workshops, Burton himself begins with a definition of the conflict. This is done with reference to the issues and parties involved. In his view, the issues define the parties. The behaviour of the parties is, above all, influenced by their perceptions of the interests and issues in dispute.

While the Burtonian model does not provide for a technical rating of conflict (as is the case with some other problem-solving workshops), it does provide for the definition of conflict in terms of the diagnosis of underlying causes or sources of conflict. Burton's first step therefore broadly corresponds to that of the problem-solving workshop.

The second procedural step - the establishment of communication between parties - corresponds to the "gathering of information" phase in the model of Levi and Benjamin (1977). In both these models, the parties themselves provide the important information inputs. The role of the third party is essentially to facilitate the process by asking appropriate questions and to interpret the information to the parties with a view to establishing a common frame of reference.

Step 3 (the "control of information") or, to use Burton's terminology, the "control of communication", is a more elaborate and structured phase than its equivalent in the model of Levi and Benjamin. Their "influence attempts" correspond to Burton's concept of "control of communication". In both cases, the role of the third party is non-coercive and supportive.

Step 4 in the Burtonian model - identification of areas of "functional/regional cooperation" - combines the processes of "deciding among options" and "creating new solutions" which one finds in the model of Levi and Benjamin.

In both models, this process precedes the eventual resolution or termination of conflict while the functions of the third party at this stage are essentially similar. Both these models intend to arrive at a redefinition of the conflict by the

parties themselves so as to make the conflict more amenable to resolution. "Reperception" is the key phrase in the Burtonian model.

The fifth and final step in Burton's model (conflict resolution), is also the last step in the model of Levi and Benjamin. Burton attempts to move beyond this so as to include the avoidance of conflict as a further objective.

The Burtonian model has been criticized on both substantive and methodological grounds. Yalem (1971:263:273), for instance, criticized the model for its reliance on "subordinate officials" rather than on local community and national leaders. One feels, however, that Yalem misses the point which Burton frequently emphasizes in his writings (Burton, 1969:40-48) : "while these officials are subordinate to the head of state or local community leaders they are, nevertheless, sufficiently close to the top leadership and trusted by them to ensure that any insights and information gained during the controlled communication exercise will be referred directly back to national or communal leaders." In addition, the information so imparted will have maximum impact because it comes from a 'trusted source' - a person or persons who have been delegated to act as representative of the top leadership for the duration of the discussions. The additional point should be made that controlled communication," by virtue of its insistence on the academic, non-official, and non-committing nature of the discussions, never requires that representatives of any party occupy formal or official positions in the decision-making machinery of that party."

Yalem (1971:263:266) also criticizes the fact that a party to a conflict is initially represented by a subordinate representative rather than a formal government or leadership group. But this naturally depends upon the level and type of conflict which is being discussed and analysed. Both communal and international conflicts are complex phenomena and involve many parties and issues as well as many interrelated patterns of interaction. It may well be the case that the relevant participants who are appropriate at one level of conflict are quite different from those who are needed to negotiate at another level.

In view of Yalem's criticism, it should be emphasized that the technique of controlled communication should not be regarded as a substitute for traditional forms of negotiation and settlement.

Mitchell (1973:124) comments :

"Indeed, the principles underlying the technique - that only the parties themselves can finally resolve the conflict - would preclude such an attitude. Altering attitudes and perceptions towards both the conflict situation and the opposing party has always been regarded as a prior step to the two parties engaging in direct negotiation 'off their own bat', without any attempt to impose solutions by third parties. Hence, controlled communication is a preliminary to direct, two-party negotiations, and not a substitute for them".

Another substantive problem raised in Yalem's article is "that of ascertaining whether the new insights gained during the workshop are retained when the representatives return to their normal environment or whether the pressures on each individual make him/her revert to his/her original perceptions of the dispute and the other party involved."

There is also an associated problem." Even if changed perceptions are indeed retained, can these be successfully and comprehensively communicated to relevant decision-making bodies and will they have sufficient impact on these people to affect a solution to the dispute? "

With regard to the first problem, Yalem makes the following acute observation :

"...The problem of re-entry of the officials into their own societies was not discussed (in Conflict and Communication). It is possible that the clarifying effects of controlled communication could be negated by nationalist pressures after re-entry" (Yalem, 1971:267).

Moreover, the kind of political culture and ideology, for example, in democratic and socialist systems, may also influence the problem of re-entry.

This whole problem of 'altered' individual attitudes so as to minimize personal stress in a given environment is an extremely complex one. The participants in controlled communication exercises are by no means immune to such tendencies. Doob (1970:107), writing about his own experience with problem-solving workshops, detected a marked shift in attitudes and positions back to those which had existed at the beginning of his discussion two or three days before the end of the group meetings. From this he hypothesized that this "took place in preparation for a return to the normal, conflict environment of the participants which was far removed from the "abnormal" environment of the problem-solving workshop."

One cannot deny that Yalem has drawn attention to one of the most serious problems which affects any general use of controlled communication and its allied techniques. Anyone closely involved in a destructive conflict situation must be under strong psychological pressure to maintain a "perceptual and attitudinal status quo, or to revert to it once back in the environment which first called forth such a set of percepts" (Mitchell, 1973:125).

One of the problems which still needs to be more fully investigated is the relative ease with which individuals from different levels of the conflict (and presumably with quite different experiences) manage to change their perceptions about the conflict and about their opponents. It may be one thing for decision-makers, remote from the damage and loss caused by the "enemy", to admit that they have been mistaken about the opposing party's goals, motivations, and behaviour; it would, presumably, be quite another matter to attempt to bring about a similar change in people who have suffered deep personal loss or injury in the progress of the conflict.

Another problem, frequently avoided in discussion about controlled communication is about the danger which faces participants in an exercise once they have returned home, and brought their changed perceptions with them. For example, in the case of Leonard Doob and his associates in the Stirling Workshop that concerned itself with the conflict in Northern Ireland, some participants were subjected to considerable intimidation and victimisation.

A more basic and much more interesting problem, from a theoretical point of view, which has received hardly any attention,

is whether there are any crucial stages during a conflict interaction when controlled communication (or any other mediatory initiative) is sought and welcomed by the participants, and whether there is any particular stage when controlled communication is most effective in having a significant impact on the subsequent course of the conflict interaction.

In the light of previous discussion," such a stage (if it could ever be accurately established) would be likely to occur when the attitudes and perceptions of both parties are in the process of becoming less rigid and more open to change - a time when any new insights should have the 'maximum restructuring effect' and could be communicated with the least likely damage to those who are presenting them." (Personal communication by C.R. Mitchell)

In Mitchell's view (1973:126), "the more fluid and uncertain the situation, the more likely it will be that controlled communication will be a welcome initiative."

There are, as yet, even more fundamental criticisms of the assumptions which underly the technique of controlled communication. Both Yalem (1971:263-273) and Cot (1972:31-39) focused on two major problems. The first is the perennial one of the essential 'subjectivity' of conflict, and the precise meaning of the concept "subjective". The second problem" is the question of the validity of utilizing findings from other disciplines and fields of enquiry to validate the application of controlled communication and other problem-solving workshop techniques in the resolution of international conflict situations!"

It is quite possible to oversimplify what is meant by conflict being essentially "subjective" rather than "objective".

Yalem (1971), for example, seems to share the common assumption that the use of the term "subjective" implies that conflicts are merely due to misperceptions which only need to be corrected for all problems to disappear before all concerned can be united in mutual admiration. Using this assumption, he makes the valid point that, "...if the subjective character of conflict is not accepted, then controlled communication must also be rejected; for if conflicts of interest are considered to be objective, the alteration of subjective perceptions and attitudes towards conflict may have little effect on conflict achievement" (Yalem, 1971:265). Later in this article, he further comments that, "...factors that precipitate conflict arise out of objective incompatibilities of interest, as well as subjective distortions and faulty images. An improvement in communication patterns may make states more rather than less aware of their differences" (Yalem, 1971:286). (Own emphasis.)

Both Yalem (1971:263-265) and Cot (1972-31-39) have criticized Burton for assuming too readily that conflicts are "subjective" and that "objective" contradictions and structural bases of conflict are not important.

In this context it might be valuable to examine precisely what conflict researchers - such as Burton - mean by the term "subjective". It seems that they "are saying something rather more than that violent or conflicting behaviour occurs because individuals, human groups, or nations misperceive both the situation itself as well as their adversaries. Of course it is true that most conflicts do contain elements of this false evaluation by one or both of the parties, and some may be de-escalated (in theory, at least) merely by

correcting a false impression of the actual long-term goals of an opposing party and its leadership. The public and private positions of decision-makers may well be at variance. All leaders, whether trade union, communal, political, or religious, are forced to accommodate the expectations of different audiences while their most significant audience must always remain (in their estimation) that constituency from whom they obtain their most support and the legitimation of their leadership. Thus their public positions necessarily harmonize more frequently with the expectations of their supporters rather than with those of the leaders and followers of any opposing party! It is for this reason that, in most conflicts, the likelihood of incorrect perceptions on the part of the people involved is very real. It becomes particularly difficult, for example, for one leadership group to demonstrate to the opposing party that its own goals has modified (or that they were never the ones attributed to them in the first place). As the conflict proceeds over a period of time, it becomes progressively more difficult for the leaders of one side to assess the actual long-term goals, the fundamental fears, the existing level of hostility, and the interpretations of the situation entertained by their opponents. Whatever the actual details in individual conflict are, there are in most cases at least elements of such false perceptions and incorrect assumptions, and in extreme (but probably rare) cases, the problem may be entirely based on misapprehensions about the opponent's goals, intentions, and motivations. It was, for example, extremely difficult for Turkish Cypriots to accept that Greek Cypriots had abandoned the idea of union with Greece (Enosis) by 1967 after they had, only a few years before, gained

Cypriot independence from British rule under the banner of that particular slogan. (Personal communication by C.R. Mitchell)

Unfortunately, as Burton has remarked elsewhere, in most international and intercommunal conflicts, there are few opportunities for "reality testing", and "controlled communication does, among other things, provide such an all-too-rare opportunity" (Mitchell, 1973:127).

What about other more specific interpretations of the concept "subjective conflict"? There are at least three ways in which conflict may be regarded as being essentially subjective :

- "(1) The conflict may be over values which are not in limited supply. Alternatively, it may be possible to redefine the nature of the conflict in such a way as to suggest alternative modes of non-conflicting behaviour for both parties involved. A dispute over territory, for example, might appear to be wholly "objective", but if the long-term goal of both conflicting parties were a substantial increase in national wealth, this could be achieved by a collaborative exploitation of the disputed territory. On the other hand, the territorial conflict may be based on a feeling entertained by both sides that their security is threatened. But "security" is not a commodity in a fixed supply. A satisfactory solution would, therefore, be one in which both parties were to gain an increase in "security" without each side compromising the security of the other party involved.
- (2) No goal for any party (however defined) can be assigned a fixed and immutable value. A consequence of this is that the relative value which a party attached to all goals in terms

of preference and importance might well change over a period of time. Such a change could lead to the devaluation of a particular goal which in the past had brought the party into conflict with its adversary. In such circumstances, the sacrifice of a goal might not be such sacrifice after all.

It is, however, more often the case that multiple goals are pursued simultaneously, whilst the particular order of importance attached to the whole spectrum of goals may alter over a period of time or according to the wishes of whatever leadership faction happens to be in power. This means that the evaluation of a party's goals in the context of any conflict is essentially a matter of subjective calculation.

- (3) The reassessment of costs (or sacrifices) in relation to the realization of goals is again an essentially subjective phenomenon and depends upon variables internal to the parties themselves." (Personal communication by C.R. Mitchell, London, September 1983)

Mitchell (1973:128) persuasively argues the case for the subjective nature of conflict as follows :

"If any single theme underlies all the above arguments, it is that, while a conflict may be objective at a particular point in time, changes in the parties' objectives, preferences, evaluations, and calculations that occur over a period of time render it a changeable and hence an intensely subjective phenomenon. Conflict may be described as subjective, in the sense that changes occur within the parties themselves (and in their orientations and perceptions to the dispute forming part of their environment), rather than in the "objective" situation, external to them from which the original mutually incompatible goals arose."

The most interesting point about the subjective approach is not that all goals are subjective (and hence changeable over time), but that research suggests that some 'classes' of goals are easily changeable while others seem to be completely fixed even over long periods. It is in this regard that Burton's generalized statement that all goals are ultimately subjective is least satisfactory, since he fails to distinguish between those goals (and those attitudes and perceptions) which are more or less amenable to change and those which are static and intractable. It would, for example, be very difficult to change a sixty-year-old rural Afrikaner's perceptions of the nature and evils of interracial marriages - at least in a short space of time. To change a younger, urban Afrikaner's views with regard to a peripheral problem about which he has no strong opinions and little reliable information would, one presumes, be an easier task.

Mitchell (1973:129) suggests that it may be possible to "arrange goals (as well as perceptions and attitudes) along a continuum, from those goal-types which can be easily altered at one end" to those which are "almost impossible to alter (over however long a period of time) and which would remain intractable in the face of the most severe threats, the most subtle bargaining, or even the most successful controlled communication exercise at the other end. "

If such classification of goal-types could be developed, "it might enable an observer to predict with some success when conflicts are over rigid goals (which involve rigid perceptions and attitudes) and which are hence more likely to become more aggravated by an exponential accumulation of incompatibility over time,

or when conflicts are rooted in reasonably flexible goals which could easily be changed and become compatible with those of the other party so that the conflict process has a possibility of becoming beneficial with a resultant cessation of damaging conflict behaviour." To summarize this argument : it seems that all goals (and hence all conflicts) are to some extent subjective, but that some are more subjective than others.

In turning to the second problem - that of using analogous reasoning to support the use of controlled communication as a technique for the resolution of international conflict - we note that a number of points are relevant. Yalem (1971:263-266) criticizes Burton's "over-ready acceptance" of this method of justifying the use of controlled communication because of the lack of significant and convincing data generated by statistically significant controlled communication exercises. Yalem (1971:268) asserts that it is "...highly dubious that validity may be established by means of generalizations adduced from data adduced from other fields of enquiry. Scientific method requires that the source of confirmation or disconfirmation of hypotheses be drawn from data generated within the subject matter under consideration".

Any response to this criticism depends, in part, on which particular elements of controlled communication as a resolution technique are justified by resort to analogous reasoning. There are, in fact, two separate aspects of the technique supported by data drawn from outside the actual universe of controlled communication exercises. Burton tends to confuse these two aspects throughout Conflict and Communication, so that it is at times difficult to tell whether or not he is attempting to justify the

technique of controlled communication by the use of analogous examples.

The two separate aspects of the technique of controlled communication are, firstly, its use as a technique for developing new insights into a conflict and for altering individual participants' perceptions of the nature of the conflict and of their opponents - thus providing a new input into the interaction pattern involved in the conflict; the second aspect is its use as a technique for resolving the conflict itself - peacefully and in a non-coercive fashion.

In the first case, there seems to be some a priori justification for accepting analogous reasoning as a valid and appropriate method. There is a considerable amount of evidence from the field of small group dynamics and social psychology about the probable effects of small group interactions structured in the same way as controlled communication workshops. The rules of the game are essentially similar in all these problem-solving exercises.

Claims for the second case, however, need to be treated with considerable caution. Analogous reasoning may, indeed, not be appropriate in this case, but "that it cannot depend upon the contention that international conflicts (and the international environment in which they manifest themselves) are unique or are, at least, fundamentally different in nature from any other form of organised, violent (or even non-violent) conflict." [31] If one takes the contrary position on this issue, namely, that there are sufficient similarities between conflict situations and processes at different levels of interaction to render such a study a unified one, then the practice of analogous reasoning is seen to be less

problematic. Burton takes such a view of the inherent dynamic of conflict irrespective of the level of interaction where conflict is to be found.

Mitchell (1973:130) differs strongly from Yalem's fundamental objection to the use of analogous reasoning in support of controlled communication. (Yalem's objection is that one cannot transfer findings from one "level" - the international - because these two levels are fundamentally different, and that this "fundamental" division is one generally recognised by political scientists.) Yalem (1971) cites Hans Morgenthau as being typical of those political scientists who uphold this distinction. However, more than a decade earlier, Alger (1962:414-420) argued that politics in an international setting is "not qualitatively different from that within the framework of national units."

Yalem more specifically argues that findings about conflict and its resolution which are obtained from the study of intranational disputes (religious, organisational, communal, industrial, linguistic) can offer limited insights into conflicts at the international level.

It may be argued, in response to Yalem's criticism, that many national and international disputes are so intertwined as to make separate analysis extremely difficult. One could, in addition, also pose the question as to whether this is in fact the case or not.

Yalem's other main point in justifying "the fundamental hiatus between international and other kinds of political behaviour" is that the international system is "...still primarily dominated by intense rivalries of power and ideology, manifested in objective

conflicts of interest" (Yalem, 1971:271) so that any analysis which "...seriously neglects the primacy of power and threat processes operative in the international system..." is both misleading and inaccurate (Yalem, 1971:268).

It is not our purpose here to enter into an extended discussion of the nature of the international system, and whether or not it is fundamentally different in all respects from national or intra-national systems, but it does seem appropriate to make the general point that there seems to be many processes in intra-national politics (defining such a term as broadly as possible) that are equally characterised by power and threat processes. (One could cite many examples. Let me name only two : the Kurds' search for autonomy within an Arab-dominated Iraq, and the 1976 and most recent urban unrest in South Africa.) Similarly, one can refer to a sufficient number of examples of 'collaborative behaviour' within the international system to raise, at least, the possibility that, both quantitatively and qualitatively international relationships may not be primarily dominated by rivalry or "objective" conflicts of interest "any more (or less) than are relationships within national societies" (Mitchell, 1973:130).

Returning to Yalem's central argument - that of using analogous reasoning to support the use of controlled communication as a technique for the analysis and resolution of international conflict - research conducted by Burton and other scholars [33] reveals many parallels and analogies (as well as, not surprisingly, some differences) between some conflicts at the international level and some conflicts which take place within the

confines of ostensibly separate, sovereign and independent state entities.

Cot (1972:35) is highly sceptical about "the systematic extrapolation to an international level of the results of the study of conflict in small groups." [34] In Cot's opinion, Burton underestimates the 'specificity' of the international system.

Cot's disagreement about basic principles has consequences for the analysis of conflict resolution. One may recall the classic distinction between the control and resolution of conflicts. The control of a conflict limits the extent of hostility and the intensity of the conflict. Cot cites the example of the UNFICYP (UN Peace-keeping Forces in Cyprus) which effectively limited the costs in human lives. One may note, however, that these actions were in no way intended to solve the conflict and may well eventually complicate it by, for example, maintaining the status quo of an essentially artificial situation.

The distinction between 'crisis control' and 'conflict resolution' is at the basis of the separation of the authorities invested with peace-keeping functions and those asked to assist in solving the conflict. Cot finds Burton's criticism of this distinction difficult to understand. He comments (1972:35-36): "It seems to me that to entrust the mediator with executive functions would be to give him just that authority that Burton denies him."

Cot finds himself in agreement with Burton's analysis on "systematic levels". A conflict is composed of a series of tensions at different systemic levels. Burton, however, seems to underestimate this fact in his analysis and he appears to be excessively optimistic when he states that an agreement at a local level will

be acceptable at the other levels. Cot argues that, for example, an agreement between Israelis and Palestinians will not automatically be satisfactory and acceptable to the other Arab states whose internal political balance may depend on the continuation of the conflict. Cot feels that, to make the proposition useful, one should reverse it and say that an agreement between Israelis and Palestinians is impossible so long as certain internal tensions in the other Arab states have not disappeared. The "spillover effects" which Burton talks about seem to be rather more important than he cares to admit (Cot, 1972:36).

When writing about conditions of successful mediation, Burton examines questions of procedure (for example: "Which mediator? "How should he act?" and so forth). He seems to imply that any mediation is liable to succeed if only it is well conceived. He tends to omit the importance of the time factor. Cot (1972) and various other scholars [35], are, on the contrary, of the opinion that time is an essential element in the mediation process. The balance of tensions between the different systemic levels is constantly changing and is, at different times, more or less favourable to conflict resolution. "A mediator's art then would largely consist of being able to grasp the crucial or favourable moment and crystallize the situation at the right moment in time." Unfortunately, the mediator can rarely choose his moment and is generally called in too late. Mediation often fails simply because it is usually impossible to synchronise the mediation with the conflict.

As a general rule, the mediator has little influence on the parties and none whatsoever on the underlying causes of the

conflict. His contribution can only be a useful analysis of the conflictual process. If he feels that the moment has come to resolve the conflict, he should try to persuade the parties that such resolution is possible. But he cannot force the moment.

Burton proposes a set of procedures which are an implicit criticism of more traditional means of mediation. Although these proposals are extremely interesting, they seem to be somewhat unrealistic because they separate mediation and conflict. Whether one likes it or not, the intervention of a third party in a conflict is a new element in the constellation of conflictual factors. It certainly would be preferable if both parties were to negotiate directly with the mediator. It would certainly also be preferable if both parties were to agree simply to overlook the problem of "status" or "recognition".

Burton's procedural suggestions present the same difficulties. They seem to be technically correct, but difficult or even impossible to implement. In the Cyprus conflict, for example, it was very difficult to find one mediator acceptable to both parties. [36] A panel of such mediators would have been even more difficult to assemble. John Burton and his associates are rightly proud of the record of achievements attributable to them at the Centre for the Analysis of Conflict in London. But Cot wonders whether the various parties who were invited did not accept the invitation "because they knew it was a game, and not real" (Cot, 1982:37).

Burton's emphasis on procedures, especially during the phases of the "control of communication" and "resolution of conflict", serves a specific purpose, namely, to depersonalise

conflict, and hence to remove subjectivity. The underlying rationale is that subjective conflict has to be made more objective through the application of specific procedures so as to make it more amenable to resolution.

As a social scientist, Burton follows procedures for the analysis and resolution of conflict which differ markedly from those of the legal profession. The emphasis in the Burtonian model, especially during the first stages of conflict analysis, is not on procedures as such but rather on 'perceptions' and 'images'. Procedures become important - for the reason given above - during the latter stages of the exercise. Cot, however, has a point when he asserts that most successful mediation "culminates in some or other legal agreement."

Burton's general hostility towards "compromise" seems to be consonant with his general lack of confidence in law. One should eliminate rigid solutions and conflict should be resolved by 'cooperation.' But Burton is not very persuasive on this point. It seems rather optimistic to believe that "functional cooperation" can effectively replace all legal guarantees or compromise in conflict resolution. One cannot transform hostility into trust overnight. Even if the negotiators themselves are convinced that cooperation is the only alternative, one has to persuade the broader population and such a process takes time. Legal safeguards seem useful - at least during an intermediary period. Most successful mediation usually culminates in some or other form of legal agreement based on compromise anyway. Burton's hostility towards compromise seems to be of theoretical rather than of practical value. In the real world compromise is an essential element of successful bargaining and of third-party intervention.

Like Yalem (1971), Cot's principal objection relates to Burton's conception of conflict. Communication and perception are important dimensions of a conflict relationship. Distortions of perception and communication do explain many things. But these distortions themselves need to be explained. Cot argues in a different way that the subjective elements are the reflection of the objective elements of conflict. He cites the example of the two Cypriot communities : "they may hate each other (subjective elements), but there are objective factors of antagonism (economic inequality, social differentiation, ownership of land by the Greeks, etc.) which underlie these subjective manifestations of the conflict "(Cot, 1972:34).

Contrary to Burton, Cot believes that "one must accept the primacy of the objective factors of conflict : the economic, social, and political contradictions of the situation." In the case of Cyprus, Cot argues, any study should begin with an assessment of existing objective elements of conflict. One should also study the conflicts in the other interested countries (such as Greece and Turkey), and finally the international dimensions of the conflict. These contradictions balance each other, sometimes favouring the internal Cypriot system (the 1963 crisis), and sometimes favouring the international system (the London and Zurich agreements). None of these elements is, however, subjective (Cot, 1972:34).

Burton's attempt to differentiate between what professional diplomats and the like think it takes to resolve a conflict; what members of academic disciplines such as political science think it takes; and what the empirical scientist thinks it takes, is useful because few of us consider entrenched disciplinary positions as to

be in the realm of 'folk belief'. He proposes a series of components and procedures, the sum total of which he believes will enable almost anyone at all to become a peacemaker. The only thing wrong with this idea as set forth, is that it does not adequately account for variations in types of conflict, in types of relationships between conflicting parties, and in the cultural variable which affects each individual conflict. In one conflict, mediation may be the way to termination; in another, legal undertakings may be more effective; in yet another, what Burton terms "functional cooperation" may be the most effective.

In Nader's view (1972:54), if one intends to systematise or professionalise the role of a third party, it has to be the situation that defines the distinctive features to be used. This is different from saying that "no fixed procedures are possible".

The general point to be made about Burton's position here is that, while he understands very well the importance of the perceptions of the parties, he has not adequately considered culture as a variable to be taken into account in working out any set of universal components of conflict resolution techniques.

Nader (1972:55) comments :

"He is aware of the structural differences between conflict such as Cyprus, the Middle East, the Vietnamese, and the USSR-Chinese situations, but here he is more concerned with sociological structure than cultural structure. In some cases, sociological variables such as the number of parties to a conflict will be an overriding factor; in other cases, the weight of attitudes about facing one's opponent, for example, will be crucial".

Returning to the assumptions underlying successful mediation, some of Burton's statements seem to be somewhat contradictory, as when, for example, he asserts : "An important principle of mediation is that the only source of information is the parties concerned" and where he states : "Propositions on conflict direct the attention of the third party to influences not otherwise apparent". We know from everyday experience that people do not necessarily verbalise what is in their minds. Nor can one discover only from listening to the parties what the relevant structural issues of a particular case may be. It is true that too much information (total information is in any case a logical impossibility) may confuse or confound the understanding of a third party; what is needed is a separation of the case as perceived by the parties from information gathered from other reliable sources.

Burton's work, focusing on the cumulative insights of the Cyprus case, is encouraging for scholars who would like to see the development of a 'life-history' approach to the study of different types of conflict situations - but it is the life history of the particular conflict that may well prove to be important to a more theoretical understanding of conflict as a social process.

The efficacy of controlled communication as a technique for the analysis and resolution of conflict needs to be evaluated on two counts :

"Firstly, problems which arise from the technique of controlled communication itself, and more specifically whether or not it works effectively in changing the attitudes and perceptions of those individuals who take part in the exercise, as well as factors which make for success (or failure) in bringing about such changes need to be evaluated.

Secondly, problems relating to the actual impact of a communication exercise on the substantive dispute and whether or not (and how) a successful exercise can contribute significantly (or even insignificantly) to bringing about a major change in the pattern of conflict interaction and the relations between the parties to that conflict, also needs to be evaluated" (Mitchell, 1973:123).

On both of these counts, the success and outcome of Burton's workshop are difficult to assess. There are no detailed accounts of these discussions since no recordings or transcripts were made. The emphasis was on secrecy and the absence of official commitment so as to enhance the development of new and creative approaches to the conflict. There is therefore no official record or follow-up of these workshops. Kelman, who participated in the second (1966) workshop, provides some indication of the success (or failure) of controlled communication with reference to these two issues. With regard to the first (the changing of individual attitudes and perceptions), he comments :

"The parties seem to have communicated to each other some new and important facts about their respective goals and intentions. Some new insights about the origins and escalation of the conflict have apparently been developed. Certainly by the end of the sessions the parties were able to communicate with each other more freely and with a shared frame of reference (Kelman, 1972: 172)".

Anthony De Reuck, a former associate of The Centre for the Analysis of Conflict at the University of London, and a participant in both the earlier pilot workshop and that of 1966, confidently asserts that "individual perceptions and attitudes had been changed positively" (1974:70).

With reference to the second issue - the actual impact of a controlled communication exercise on the conflict - the assessment is far more speculative. For example, while Kelman argues that the "new information and insights acquired by the participants were transmitted to the top leaders of their own groups, because of the relationship of the participants to the decision-making process" (1972:172), he also states that, "...we can only speculate, however, about the extent to which and the way in which these entered into subsequent negotiations" (Kelman, *passim*).

Shortly after the exercise, communication between the two parties was resumed. It is quite likely that the exercise played some role in this development although we can never be certain. Kelman feels that, at the very least, it may have provided 'a mechanism for the parties to explore each others' feelings in a non-committal fashion and an opportunity to learn whether resumption of negotiations would be useful.'

On this second count, it needs to be emphasised that Burton and his associates certainly do not present their approach to conflict and its resolution as a panacea for all conflictual ills, but rather as part of a more comprehensive process toward conflict resolution (Burton, 1972:5-29; Burton, 1972b:41-52). Controlled communication is "essentially an exploration of relationships which aims at understanding the underlying causes and dynamic of conflict". The aim of controlled communication is to assist the parties, firstly, to redefine their situation so that they perceive it as a 'joint predicament which may be cooperatively resolved and, secondly, to equip them with a common language for communication.'

"The process includes several interwoven strands. There is a negative phase, in which the parties are assisted to divest themselves of their roles as opponents, to discard misperceptions of past events and to re-examine their own values and calculations of proposed solutions. The positive phase consists of correcting mutual misperceptions and a redefinition of the conflict so as to make it more amenable to resolution"(De Reuck, 1974:78).

5.6 Conclusion

In the opinion of one of the panelists who was involved in both the December 1965 and October 1966 meetings, the results were extremely encouraging. In his view "they provided the behavioural scientists with valuable theoretical and methodological insights, and the discussions themselves generated data of profound intrinsic interest and relevance to the continued evaluation of the conflicts concerned in their subsequent stages" (De Reuck, 1974:65).

A final problem which should be mentioned concerns the notions of individual and collective rationality. Burton and his associates begin from the premise that man is rational and therefore capable of rational behaviour. The dynamic of their model is based on the assumption of collective rationality, and in this way it is essentially similar in its theoretical assumptions to game theory and simulation exercises. Collective rationality, especially in the processes of "control of communication", the identification of areas of functional cooperation, and conflict resolution, is made possible by following the "rules of the game" as suggested by the third party. This gives rise to two problems :

First, the model fails to explain how participants make the transition from a position of individual rationality to that of collective rationality. Secondly, it fails to justify how the panel or third party is in a position to propose the "rules of the game" in the first place. In practice, such a procedure implies that the panel or third party defines the ground rules for collective rationality. This may contradict Burton's view that resolution must ultimately come from the parties themselves. In this sense, the role of the third party is more than merely diagnostic : it becomes prescriptive as well, and of central importance for the functioning of the model.

From the writings and discussions with scholars involved in the two workshops [37], it becomes clear that these meetings enabled the parties "to correct mutual misperceptions, redefine their situation, reassess the value of their objectives in relation to costs, and envisage new policy options". The application of the technique of controlled communication thus seems to have served a primarily theoretical function in the sense that it provided the opportunity for the formulation of hypotheses about the nature and dynamic of conflict. In addition, these exercises served as a valuable learning experience for both panelists and parties alike.

The application of the technique did not, however, result in the resolution of the conflict, while what impact the exercise had on the substantive conflict itself is uncertain. Anthony De Reuck (1974:65) is of the view that the controlled communication setting "enabled research findings to be made available to diplomats and decision-makers in contexts where they were relevant and in forms that they found to be acceptable."

Having assessed the strengths and weaknesses associated with the work of Burton and his associates, the next chapter attempts an analysis of the workshops organised under the direction of Leonard W. Doob, William Foltz, and their associates. This discussion will be on a comparative basis, with special emphasis on the similarities and differences between the two approaches.

Endnotes to Chapter 5

1. The Centre for the Analysis of Conflict was established in 1966 in the University College, London. Burton's colleagues in the Centre included C.R. Mitchell, M.H. Banks, A.J.R. Groom, M.B. Nicholson and A.V.S. De Reuck.
2. For the Fermeda workshop, the Yale group included Leonard W. Doob (psychology), William J. Foltz (political science), Robert B. Stevens (law), and a group of skilled and experienced T-group trainers : William J. Crockett, Charles K. Ferguson, Richard E. Walton, and Thomas A. Wickes. For the Stirling workshop, the group was limited to Doob and Foltz as organizers, five consultants, and two administrators/deputies.
3. The so-called Harvard Group included, at various times, the following individuals : Herbert C. Kelman (social psychologist), Stephen P. Cohen (social psychologist), Frederick D Miller, and Bruce L. Smith.
4. For a discussion of the domain assumptions about the nature of conflict and its resolution, see the previous chapter.
5. These scholars are presently all attached to different academic institutions in the United Kingdom. Burton and Groom are, respectively, director and co-director of the Institute for the Study of Conflict, University of Kent, Canterbury. Michael Banks teaches international relations at the London School of Economics and Political Science. Chris Mitchell teaches international relations at the City University, London. Anthony De Reuck is attached to the University of Surrey in the United Kingdom.
6. For Burton (1972b:45-46), conflict is "objective" only in relation to the interest elements involved. The element of scarcity, both in a positional and resource sense, provides the dynamic of "objective" conflict.
7. The subjective element of perception (and misperception) by the conflicting parties is accompanied by another element, namely, the assessment of values sought in relation to costs.
8. The notion of the functionality of conflict derives from the intellectual legacy of Lewis Coser, Georg Simmel, and Georges Sorel. Coser's The Functions of Social Conflict. (The Free Press, New York, 1954) provides a coherent discussion of this notion.
9. Examples in point would be conflicts that are regarded as just or functional by one or both of the parties. The notions of a "just" and "holy war" (as in the Middle Eastern arena) would fit such a categorisation.

10. For a first class discussion of the role of third parties in conflict see Mitchell, C.R. Peacemaking and the Consultant's Role, Gower, Westmead, 1981.
11. From the point of view of conflict resolution, controlled communication is a therapeutic technique with much in common with T-group processes. The presence of the panel of experts serves three key functions : (1) It acts as a neutral reference group with a supportive role, discharging tension, rewarding insight and promoting learning processes. (2) It makes available a relatively objective framework of reference - a set of conceptual tools for restructuring the accepted pattern of ideas about the conflict in the minds of the parties. (3) It therefore creates conditions for the emergence and examination of new solutions to the problem. The office of chairman is also akin to that of observer at a T-group session. It is to prevent the imposition of formal procedures : to steer the meeting from analysis to resolution and back again; and to be supportive of the meeting as a whole and of its outcome.
12. The pilot workshop of December 1965 took place in the council room of a medical research foundation in London. The participants sat at an oval table. The numbers present varied between nine and sixteen; the panel always slightly outnumbered the parties. Seating was deliberately unplanned as a gesture of informality. The group met for six hours of discussion each day, with breaks for coffee, luncheon and tea, which the parties and panel took together. In these breaks smaller groups could talk and tension could be released. The panel met every night to take stock. The parties retired to their respective embassies to do the same.
13. The concept, "conflict resolution", as used by Burton, is similar in meaning to the term "conflict termination".
14. Apart from John Burton himself, the panel consisted of C.R. Mitchell, M.H. Banks, A.J.R. Groom, M.B. Nicholson, and A.V.S. De Reuck.
15. George Simmel's original essay "Der Streit" was published in 1928.
16. See, Coser, Lewis A. The Functions of Social Conflict, (The Free Press, New York, 1954), and his Continuities in the Study of Conflict, (The Free Press, New York, 1967).
17. Campbell, D.T. and D. Levine (eds.). "Ethnocentric and other Altruistic Motives", in The Nebraska Symposium on Motivation. (Nebraska Press, 1965).
18. Fairly influential have been the writings of Jervis, notably : Jervis, R. "Hypotheses on Misperception", World Politics, XX (3), 1968, pp.454-479; and his The Logic of Images in International Relations (Princeton University Press, Princeton, N.J., 1970).

19. Burton and his associates plead for the institutionalisation of conflict resolution as an ongoing process. An integrative solution may evolve over time.
20. Examples in point are Angola and Mozambique after the collapse of Portuguese colonial rule in these two countries. In both cases, the conflict has not been resolved at the local level.
21. This statement applies to almost all states. Of the many examples, the crisis in Lebanon provides an appropriate example.
22. Here one may refer to the outbreak of violence in Cyprus when a Turkish policeman was shot, or the outbreak of World War I following the assassination of Ferdinand of Austria.
23. This constitutes an intricate problem in any negotiation. For example, trade union officials may arrive at agreements with management that are later rejected by the rank and file.
24. From the point of view of conflict analysis (as distinct from that of conflict resolution), controlled communication is a research tool allied to simulation techniques. The concepts "information flows", "overloading" and "mirror images" derive from cybernetics and communication theory.
25. The particular sources in question are : Jervis, R. "Hypotheses on Misperception", World Politics, XX (3), 1968, pp.454-479; and his Logic of Images in International Relations (Princeton University Press, Princeton, N.J., 1970).
26. Anthony De Reuck, who acted as chairman, had considerable experience of small intergroup behaviour. A modified Bales Interaction Scale was used as well as subsequent tape recordings and transcripts of forty other meetings to provide a framework for controlled communication. Burton and his associates used the work of R. F. Bales on small group dynamics, notably his Interaction Process Analysis : A Method for the Study of Small Groups (Addison-Wesley Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1950); "Channels of Communication in Small Groups", American Sociological Review, 16, 1951, pp. 461-468, and "How People Interact in Conferences", Scientific American, 192, 1955, pp.31-35.
27. The basic argument here is that scholars with a "systems perspective" would be better placed to understand the interdependence between different levels of interaction within a conflict relationship and would take a holistic view of conflict.
28. Burton uses illustrations and figures for this purpose. The participants are asked to describe what they see. Invariably they perceive the same figure differently.

29. Russett, B.M. International Regions and the International System (Rand McNally, Chicago, 1967).
30. Yalem, R. Regionalism and World Order (Public Affairs Press, 1965).
31. For an elaboration of this view see : Deutsch, M. "Conflicts : Productive and Destructive" Journal of Social Issues, XXV (1), March 1969, pp.7-41.
32. This assertion rests on the assumption that conflict as a social phenomenon displays essentially similar dynamics irrespective of the level at which it manifests itself.
33. Apart from Burton's own work, notably his "The Analysis of Conflict by Case Work", Yearbook of World Affairs, Stevens, London, 1967), the research conducted by Alger, C.F. "A comparison of intra-national and international politics", American Political Science Review, LVII, June 1962, pp.414-420, is especially useful here.
34. For two excellent discussions of the so-called "level-of-analysis problem" in international relations, see Singer, J.D. "The level-of-analysis problem in international relations", World Politics, October 1961, pp.77-82, and Berkowitz, Bruce D. "Levels of Analysis Problems in International Studies", International Interactions, vol. 12, no. 3, 1986, pp.199-227.
35. Of the many examples, the following may be cited in support of this view : Lall, A. Modern International Negotiation : Principles and Practice. (Columbia University Press, New York, 1966); Young, Oran. The Intermediaries : Third Parties in International Crises. (Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1967); and Cot, J.P. International Conciliation. (Stevens, London, 1972).
36. Mr Rolz-Benett, the UN Secretary General's first choice, was rejected by one of the parties.
37. The author was fortunate enough to have spent some time in the United Kingdom during September and October of 1983. During this period extended discussions were held with, among others, John Burton, John Groom, Clive Mitchell and Anthony De Reuck. The latter acted as chairman in the 1966 workshop.

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CHAPTER 6

THE WORK OF LEONARD DOOB AND HIS ASSOCIATES

6.1 Introduction

The intention of this chapter is to analyse the conflict resolution workshops developed by Leonard Doob and his associates, with specific reference to the Fermeda and Stirling workshops, and to examine these on a comparative basis so as to contrast and compare them with the work of John Burton and his colleagues. The overriding objectives of this chapter are to explore the overall conception, underlying assumptions, procedures and methodology, results, strengths and limitations of the work of Doob and his associates. The research of Herbert Kelman of Harvard informs the comparative analysis. [1]

Two different types of workshops have been selected for analysis, namely, Fermeda [2] held in August 1969, and Stirling [3], held in August 1972. The inclusion of both of these is justified because it illustrates the two main usages of the workshop idea, namely, conflict resolution (as in the case of Fermeda), and as an analytical and learning exercise, conflict analysis (as in the case of Stirling). On theoretical and historical grounds, the Fermeda workshop will be analysed first, followed by a discussion of the Stirling workshop. A third ten-day workshop on the Cyprus conflict, involving twelve Greek and twelve Turkish Cypriots, was planned to assemble at the Hotel Fermeda in July 1974. It was necessary to abandon the workshop due to the successful coup against the government of Archbishop Makarios, and the subsequent military involvement in Cyprus by the Turkish military.

Consequently, this chapter concerns itself only with the Fermeda and Stirling workshops. However, Doob did publish two short articles on the projected Cyprus workshop. These are listed in the references at the end of the chapter.

6.2 Fermeda - resolving border conflict in Africa

Working independently of the London group, Leonard Doob and William Foltz of Yale University, developed their techniques for conflict analysis and resolution out of their concern regarding a long-standing border conflict in Africa, that between Somalia, Kenya and Ethiopia. By his own admission, Doob initially proposed the use of sensitivity training as a technique for conflict resolution in 1966, but saw this as something of a "wild idea".[4] For the next three years, the "wild idea" was kept alive. Specific assumptions about the nature of conflict and about its resolution were formulated and efforts were undertaken to see if the ideas might actually be feasible. In 1968, a workshop was planned but it had to be cancelled following the withdrawal of consent by the Somalian government. Finally, in August 1969, the Fermeda workshop was able to commence. However, before an analysis of this workshop is attempted, the key domain assumptions that support this and other research efforts are outlined.

6.2.1 Domain assumptions

A careful reading and analysis of the relevant publications by Doob and his associates, reveal the following as some key domain assumptions that inform their research on conflict.

The first, and arguably most basic assumption, is that

conflicts are "inevitable because resources and time are limited or because alternative courses of action are usually numerous" (Doob, 1983:1). Thus conflict is not explained with reference to human nature or to "inner man", but rather with reference to scarcity of resources and rational choice. Doob and his associates share this assumption with numerous other scholars, among them John Burton.

A second assumption - also shared by various other scholars, notably Coser, Simmel and Burton - is that not all conflicts are 'undesirable' or 'destructive.' Doob and his associates concur with Lewis Coser (1956:20), when he writes : "...the spice they (conflicts) add to living provides an incentive to achieve personal or group goals". However, many, perhaps most conflicts are ultimately 'painful' or 'non-productive', hence conflict resolution is consciously or unconsciously pursued. The desire at conflict resolution implies an explicit value judgment : a person or persons in conflict seek a 'favourable' resolution. Most conflicts are assumed to be resolvable.

A third assumption is that conflict resolution results "either from an external constraint, imposed by another party, or from a prolonged interaction between competing parties or individuals." Doob and his associates show a preference for the latter type of resolution. However, a conflict between two parties seeking an advantage only one of them can attain, may result in a compromise or a zero-sum solution with a winner and a loser.

A fourth assumption is that the way in which parties to a conflict articulate demands, interests and issues does not necessarily reflect the real interests and issues in conflict.

6.2.2 Background to the conflict

In this short introduction to the Fermeda workshop, an outline of the conflicts between Kenya and Somalia and between Ethiopia and Somalia in broad terms is attempted. Additional background material on these conflicts is available in many other publications. [6]

The Republic of Somalia, composed of what were formerly Italian and British Somaliland, gained its independence in 1960. Somalia, unlike any other sub-Saharan state, is virtually homogeneous, for almost its entire population belong to a Somali culture, and speak essentially the same language. [7] For historical, nationalistic and political reasons, Somalia seeks to "unite all those Somalis now living in French Somaliland, the Ogaden and other Somali-inhabited areas of Ethiopia, and in the Northern Frontier Territories of Kenya" (Doob (ed.) 1970:3).

French Somaliland does not feature directly in the conflicts analysed here except that its ultimate political status is obviously of practical and symbolic importance to Ethiopia, since, Djibouti, its capital, is the terminus of the railway line from Addis Ababa and hence that country's only outlet to the sea.

The disputed areas in question are the Ogaden, the Haud, and the North Eastern Province of Kenya (formerly known as the Northern Frontier District). According to the Somali definition, the Somalis constitute the majority in all these areas. Somali nomads still use, and have been using, the areas in dispute as grazing lands for their cattle and that far greater numbers migrate back and forth in territory held by Ethiopia than that held by Kenya. Occasional armed conflict breaks out along the borders and inside the disputed areas. All three countries spend a not inconsiderable part of their

budgets on both defensive and small offensive operations by their armed forces.

Like so many conflicts, this particular border conflict has to be seen against the backdrop of a wider historical canvas. The Somalis were occupying the northern part of what is now the Somali Republic in the 10th century, and were soon converted to Islam by teachers from Arabia. In the following centuries the Somalis migrated southwards, conquering and absorbing other peoples such as the Galla.

On the coast of the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden were several ancient harbour towns which played a pivotal role in regional trade. This trade was the basis of several states such as Adal, which under Ahmed Gran in the 16th century led a religious or holy war against Ethiopia. Ahmed Gran's forces conquered much of Ethiopia but were eventually driven out in 1543, when the legendary Ahmed Gran was killed.

The important Somali ports of Kismayu and Mogadishu were controlled during most of the 18th and 19th centuries by Arabs and the Ottoman Empire. Late in the 19th century European influence grew, and in 1884 Britain established the Somaliland Protectorate in the northern regions in order to protect its colonial interests in neighbouring Kenya and trade routes in this part of Africa. Italy took control of the southern regions, partly by treaty and partly by force, between 1882 and 1937. Somali territory in the west was colonised by the French, and became known as the Territory of the Afars and Issas.

There was considerable resistance led by Muhammad Abdille Hassan, who declared a 'jihad' (holy war) against the colonial

rulers. The fighting lasted for twenty years, until Hassan was finally defeated. However, this did not mean the end of Somali nationalism. The latter continued with renewed vigour under the direction of the Somali Youth League, founded in 1934, and grew into a political movement that demanded unity for the different parts of Somali territory. When Italy was defeated in the Second World War (1939-45), its administration of a part of Somaliland did not come to an end. It continued to administer its former colony from 1950 by United Nations Mandate. Both British and Italian areas achieved self-rule, and in 1960 the regions joined to form the independent Somali Republic.

Since 1960 there have been various efforts to bring the French Territory, and part of the neighbouring countries inhabited by Somalis, into the Somali Republic. There were also internal factional conflicts, which led to a military takeover of the government in 1969, when General Siad Barre became head of state.

After the military takeover in Somalia in 1969 and the military overthrow of the Ethiopian Emperor in 1974, the Somali Government led by General Siyad Barreh sought to reopen the Ogaden question in a diplomatic initiative towards Ethiopia. However, the new Ethiopian government showed itself no less intent than its imperial predecessor on retaining possession of the Ogaden. Under these circumstances, the Government of Somalia in 1977 ceased its attempts to restrain the militant irredentism of Ogaden Somali groups, principal of which was the Western Somalia Liberation Front (WSLF), together with the Somali Abo Liberation Front (SALF).

Guerrilla violence in the Ogaden escalated in mid-1977 to the point of direct confrontation, with heavy casualties on both

sides. An initial phase of the war was characterised by Somali successes, including notably the capture of the town of Jijiga in September 1977 and an advance as far as Harar by November of that year. A successful Ethiopian counter-offensive was launched in January 1978 with the backing of Soviet and Cuban forces. (The Soviet Union having in 1977 reversed its former policy of providing military aid to the Somali Government). Ethiopian forces recaptured Jijiga in March 1978 and regained control of strategic points in the region. However, despite the maintenance of Ethiopian troops in the Ogaden area, Somali-backed guerrilla forces remained active in the area.

In 1980 there was renewed tension between Ethiopia and Somalia. Ethiopia restated its position in a joint Ethiopian-Kenyan communiqué of December 1980. The communiqué emphasized cooperation against what was termed "Somali expansionism" and called on Somalia to "renounce publicly and unconditionally all claims to the territories of Ethiopia, Kenya and Djibouti". The communiqué referred to the intention of the Kenyan and Ethiopian Governments of eliminating "the root cause of tension and insecurity in the region" and called on all countries to cease military assistance to Somalia. In the latter context, the United States and Somalia had negotiated an agreement in August 1980 allowing the United States use of Somali base facilities. The implementation of this agreement which provided for US military assistance to Somalia for the purchase of "defensive weapons and equipment", was delayed until January 1981, the Congress having insisted that the State Department should first provide "verified assurances" that there were no Somali forces in the Ogaden area.

The Somali Government responded to the Ethiopian-Kenyan communiqué, which it termed "provocative" and "threatening", by urging all Somalis "wherever they are" to be ready to defend their national sovereignty.

The apparently intractable nature of the conflict has meant that there has been little prospect of successful resolution during the period of twenty years since Somalia attained independence. An eight-member OAU "Good Offices" committee was established in 1973, at a time when the conflict was in a less violent phase. In 1980 the OAU reaffirmed its desire for the resolution of border disputes. Although both Ethiopia and Somalia claimed this to be a vindication of their own position, it has widely been seen as the failure of Somalia to win support for changing the status of the Ogaden. Meanwhile, it must be noted that the ethnic composition of the Ogaden population, notably the Galla and the Danakil, is being affected by the displacement of people caused by the conflict, and by an Ethiopian policy to promote new settlement in the area (Day, 1982:118-119).

6.2.3 Basic positions and perceptions of the parties

Against the background of the conflict outlined above, how did the three major contending parties to the conflict articulate their basic positions and perceptions? Leonard Doob (1970:4-6) provides a useful summary which serves as a basis here.

Somalia

"Most of the inhabitants of the Ogaden, the Haud, and the North Eastern Province of Kenya, are Somalis. The only reason they are now separated from Somalia is that these

areas were given to Ethiopia and Kenya by the former colonial powers. Secondly, Somalia insisted that the people in the disputed areas should be allowed to decide their own future. Thirdly, Somalia needs the disputed territory for their nomadic people, whose herds should be allowed to migrate across the present borders according to the seasonal availability of water and grazing. Finally, both Ethiopia and Kenya act like imperialist powers, in the sense that they prevent the disputed areas from being reunited with the Somali Republic" (Doob, 1970:4).

Ethiopia

"The Ethiopian Government argues that it has legal and historical rights to occupy the areas it controls. The boundaries of Ethiopia were established with the Italians for their part of Somalia according to various treaties, especially those of 1897 and 1908, and with the British for their part, also according to various treaties, notably that of 1897. Like Eritrea (now part of Ethiopia), the Ogaden and the Haud as well as most of Somalia previously belonged to Ethiopia in ancient times. Secondly, Ethiopia is an independent, multiracial state, and nationality need not be determined by language or culture. The Somalis in the Ogaden and the Haud belong to Ethiopia. The Ethiopian government treat them well, they identify with Ethiopia, and intermarry with Ethiopians" (Doob, 1970:4-5).

The two disputed areas are economically important to Ethiopia; "if only Somalia would cooperate in developing these areas to the mutual benefit of both states." Geography makes for a special

interdependent relationship between Ethiopia and Somalia. Finally, the Somalis are a threat to the security of Ethiopia. Not only do they settle "troublemakers disguised as nomads" into the Ogaden, "but their own government is receiving military assistance from the Soviet Union." [8]

Kenya

The Kenyan Government advanced four arguments in support of its land claims. First, "that Kenya is a multiracial state in which different peoples live in harmony with one another. Kenya is not prepared to give away parts of its territory (especially not the North Eastern Province, which covers more than one-half of the country's land area). The presence of Somalis in the North Eastern Province does not justify Somalia's claim to its sovereignty. Secondly, if the Somalis living in the North Eastern Province of Kenya wish to join Somalia, they should be allowed to do so. However, the reality is that they have not expressed any such desire. Thirdly, the British created the idea of 'Greater Somalia' in the first place and stirred up trouble in the North Eastern Province in accordance with their 'policy of divide and rule'. Finally, Somalia caused conflict in the North Eastern Province through the Somali shifita (a word coming from the English "shifter", which has acquired the connotation of bandit) who had settled in the area" (Doob,1970:5).

The conflict between the nomadic tradition of the Somalis and the fixed boundaries based on the colonial legacy have kept the Horn of Africa in a state of turmoil for decades. Efforts have been made to resolve the border conflicts through diplomacy and the good offices of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity

ever since Somalia's independence in 1960, but so far without lasting success. For example, in May 1961 the African governments at the Monrovia Conference called upon Ethiopia and Somalia to resolve their differences. In August 1963 representatives of Britain, Kenya and Somalia met in Rome and tried unsuccessfully to reach agreement concerning the North Eastern Province. During 1964 these border conflicts were discussed at Dar es Salaam, Lagos and Cairo meetings of the Organization of African Unity, and resolutions called upon the countries to resolve their disputes peacefully were passed, again fruitlessly (Day, 1982:117). At Accra in 1965 Ethiopia and Somalia agreed to refrain from 'hostile propaganda' against each other. During the same year a series of consultations between Somalia and Kenya, largely instigated by President Nyerere of Tanzania, ended in a deadlock, and serious guerrilla warfare broke out in the disputed areas.

Having outlined the background to the conflicts, introduced the points of departure of the major contending parties, the focus now shifts to the planning of and research setting of the Fermeda workshop.

6.3 Planning and research setting

In April 1966 officials of one of the Governments in East Africa approached Leonard Doob and William Foltz at Yale University through the American Field Service, with a request to organise a research team to investigate the feasibility of a federation of the East African Horn. Leonard Doob and his colleague Robert Stevens, discussed the request with some of their colleagues and rejected it. The research seemed too 'policy-oriented' and too 'unrealistic'.

During their conversations the idea of 'a workshop' was proposed as a technique that might be used to facilitate communication about the border conflicts. "At this point the theoretical and practical advice of Chris Argyris, an experienced trainer of Yale, proved most helpful" (Doob, 1970:9).

The idea of a 'workshop' was attractive, because workshops have been employed in the West by industry, the corporate sector, laboratories, and other institutions to improve their functioning and communication. More recently, governments have also used the workshop approach in their attempts to make key personnel more sensitive to some of their own leadership problems. Significantly, workshops have also been employed in the African context. [9]

Doob also felt that the workshop as such offered certain unique advantages as a learning experience. In this respect, he writes :

"It provides an opportunity for individuals to have close and prolonged contact with one another and thus, minimally, at least to perceive diverse viewpoints. It offers a stimulating and intense experience in which the participants learn more about themselves, about their relations to other persons, and hence about their own behaviour and roles in real life" (Doob, 1970:11).

In addition, the workshop approach lends itself to the application of a variety of techniques, "such as lectures, role playing exercises (simulation), and brainstorming. It also has the additional advantage of almost immediate feedback through prolonged contact in a context of direct interaction and communication " (Doob, passim.)

After deciding upon the technique of the workshop, the other elements of the research setting fell into place. Doob and his associates decided upon six representatives from each of the three relevant countries. The figure of six was chosen, because then

there would be two T-groups of nine participants each, and during other phases in the research all the participants could form a bigger group for 'less rigorous purposes.' It was also decided to meet in a neutral country, on the ground that this would facilitate more openness and flexibility on the part of the participants. However, at the outset it was made clear to the participants that the border conflict would not be 'prejudged in terms of a Federation of the East African Horn.'

The consultants and academics of Yale University acted in their private capacities, not wedded to particular aspects of the workshop technique but prepared to consider and introduce any kind of research setting that might stimulate creativity and enhance learning. The research was conceived to be undertaken in two broad phases. During the first phase, planned to last about a week, the participants would have an opportunity to learn to communicate more effectively with one another in a general way before turning to the specifics of the border disputes that would occupy the second phase and last another week. Toward the end of the second phase, it was foreseen that the participants would discuss and be given some instruction concerning the difficulties they would experience upon "re-entry" into their respective countries and communities (Doob, 1970:13).

It was decided to involve academics of standing. Academics, it was thought, would have the 'psychological attributes' that would make 'creative problem-solving' more likely. They would also not officially represent their respective governments and hence would not be constrained to uphold a view or position previously expressed by the political spokesmen of their respective countries.

On this point, Doob and his associates have much in common with Burton's earlier efforts. Both Burton and Doob emphasise the importance of the informal nature of their workshops, and the advantage to involve participants that are not themselves principal decision-makers, but rather persons that enjoy credibility with, and have access to, national decision-makers. However, because of this methodological requirement, workshops generally face the problem of 're-entry'. In the case of the Fermeda workshop, Doob and his associates also decided in favour of African academics on the ground of their ability to communicate in English.

As already stated, the initiator of the workshop idea was Leonard Doob, professor of social psychology at the University of Yale. He obtained the assistance of two colleagues, Robert B. Stevens, a lawyer who had been involved in legal issues facing East African countries in establishing a viable economic community, and William J. Foltz, a political scientist who had a special interest in the possibilities and viability of federation in Africa. These three academics liaised with another Yale colleague, Chris Argyris, a student of social change. Together they developed the concept early in 1966 which was finally to be implemented at Fermeda in 1969.

Numerous obstacles faced the raising of the necessary financial support and in securing the cooperation of all three governments. Doob (1970:175-182), provides a graphic description of all their "tribulations" in each of the three countries in their attempts to set up the workshop.

The participants from Ethiopia and Kenya were drawn from local universities, including from the faculties of law, political

science, history, geography, anthropology, engineering, mathematics, philosophy, and education. The six participants from Somalia, which does not have a major university, included a member of the opposition in parliament, a teacher, a newspaper editor, and officials in the Institute of Public Administration, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Planning (Walton, 1970:457).

The staff of consultants and organisers assembled in Rome on 1 August 1969 for the last preplanning session. The consulting team comprised the following: William J. Crockett, Charles K. Ferguson, Thomas A. Wickes and Richard E. Walton, all associated with the National Training Laboratory (NTL) Institute for Applied Behavioural Science.

In this preplanning session attention was given to specific issues, namely, phasing (two phases were decided upon); activities (methodologies - included stimulation, theory seminars, and critiques of meetings). It was also decided that a typical 'work schedule' would involve two morning sessions, an early afternoon session, an afternoon break followed by a 'social hour', and an evening session. It was also decided to have a two-day break in the middle of the workshop. Finally, attention was given to groupings (working groups), and the formulation of an operational goal. The latter was modestly formulated as follows: "...to achieve a consensus for some proposal to solve the border dispute" (Walton, 1970:458-459).

For the sake of completeness, and to guide the reader through the details of the workshop, the Fermeda schedule for the first and the second week is reproduced below.

CHART 1 - THE FERMEDA DESIGN : FIRST WEEK

Chart 1. The Fermeda Design-First Week

Time	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
8:00		----- BREAKFAST -----				----- BREAKFAST -----	
9:00		TRAINING GROUP	General Assembly and in subgroups: game (Dilemma-ment): theory and discussion on winning and losing as a human experience. Examine various strategies, assumptions, learnings - related to international problems.	TRAINING GROUP	TRAINING GROUP	General Assembly: the country groups and "Yates" present data from morning exercise to each other. Discuss.	T-groups meet and discuss main issues and "Yates" present data from morning exercise to each other. Discuss. Main issues are: individualism, external pressures on national solidarity, etc.
10:00							
11:00				General Assembly and in subgroups: theory and game-man as a human system (new-task problem).	BREAK	BREAK	
12:00		General Assembly: theory session and exercise on competition (assembling squares)			General Assembly: theory, effective teamwork, interpersonal competence (linker window)	Continue with presentations and discussion.	
1:00		LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	Participants prepare for and leave on weekend break.
2:00		TRAINING GROUP	TRAINING GROUP	Intergroup observation in T-groups.	Development and examination of relevant data on each country/country "mirror" exercise. Meet in country groups: (1) Set	Complete presentations and discussions. Decide to form a planning committee to decide how to refer, share, and clarify results. Select one man from each T-group from each country.	
3:00		Evaluation group to look back at last 24 hours of program. General Assembly subgroups.	Evaluation group.		views of their problems with other countries and (2) prediction as to what other two countries will say about them. "Yates" participants do the same.		
4:00		FREE TIME	FREE TIME	FREE TIME		Free time for other participants	Planning Group meets
5:00							
6:00							
7:00	HOSPITALITY AND DINNER	HOSPITALITY AND DINNER	HOSPITALITY AND DINNER	HOSPITALITY AND DINNER	HOSPITALITY AND DINNER	HOSPITALITY AND DINNER	
8:00							
9:00	General Assembly. Official welcome. What the workshop is about.	TRAINING GROUP	TRAINING GROUP	TRAINING GROUP	Continue work started at 2:00 P.M.	General Assembly: planning group presents "Main Issues," group starts work on a few issues.	
10:00	Short lecture on process and content.						
11:00							

CHART 2 - THE FERMEDA DESIGN : SECOND WEEK

Chart 2. The Fermeda Design—Second Week

Time	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
8:00		--- BREAKFAST ---	New planning group meets at breakfast.	----- BREAKFAST -----	
9:00	Participants return from weekend break.	T-groups individually continue the 2:00-5:00 Sunday discussion. Talk about land, women, water, and solutions to border problems.	T-groups meet. Continue to talk through their approaches/solutions.	General Assembly. Planning group shows the combined "best" plan. Vintex discussion starts.	Participants park and leave. Some finish research questionnaires. Mood/tone very somber.
10:00			Country groups meet to discuss what stand on solutions being generated.		
11:00			T-groups reconvene individually to review above step.		
12:00		Both T-groups break into groups of four for more intense discussions of issues/solutions. Meet in General Assembly to discuss possible solutions.			
1:00	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	
2:00	General Assembly: T-groups all together and compare results of discussions they had Friday A.M. Break into T-groups to further analyze, discuss. Touch on territorial integrity, self-determination, oppression of one group by another, etc.	General Assembly. Look at all suggestions generated in date for solving border problems.	T-groups divide into subgroups (within, not across). T-groups meet to work on segments of solutions.	General Assembly. Continue discussion of the "best" plan. Teams go about relationships begin to fragment, both within and across nationality and T-group lines. Feedback.	
3:00					Planning group meets to try to sharpen areas of agreement/disagreement.
4:00				T-groups reconvene individually to put together final comprehensive T-group plan for solving border problem.	General Assembly reconvenes: looks at new data; discussion. No agreement. Mood/tone somewhat dysphoric.
5:00					
6:00	FREE TIME	FREE TIME	FREE TIME	FREE TIME	
7:00	HOSPITALITY AND DINNER	HOSPITALITY AND DINNER	HOSPITALITY AND DINNER	HOSPITALITY AND DINNER	
8:00			FREE EVENING FOR SOME		
9:00	General Assembly: theory and exercise brainstorming and the creative process.	T-groups meet and continue to work on problems/solutions. New planning group formed (and one dissolved) to design final steps of program.	Decides to try to amalgamate two T-groups plans into one grand plan. Work until 10:00. Completed.	General Assembly. Speeches are made: formal goodbyes start; very little work on project. Talk about research and ground rules for discussing this experience back home.	
10:00					
11:00					

An important element of the composition and methodology of the workshop was the "working groups." For the purposes of the Fermeda workshop, the composition of the working groups was as follows :

COMPOSITION OF THE WORKING GROUPS

	<u>Working Group I</u>			<u>Working Group II</u>		
Somali participants	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6
Kenyan participants	E1	K2	K3	K4	K5	K6
Ethiopian participants	E1	E2	E3	E4	E5	E6
American organizers		O1	O2		O3	
American consultants		C1	C2	C3	C4	

Legend

Source : Walton (1970:459)


S = Somali

K = Kenyan

E = Ethiopian

A O = American organizers

A C = American consultants

 = Planning Committee

These two working groups were intentionally unstructured in two important respects. First, the consultants who announced the group assignments and scheduled time for them did not specify any substantive agenda or indeed any mechanism for deciding upon such an agenda. Secondly, the consultants did not make provision for any chairmanship for discussions. Instead the consultants emphasized that the time allocated to the working groups could be used in any way each group saw fit; but that, however they decided to use their time, "they were urged periodically to discuss their individual reactions and perceptions and assessments of the group process in order to sharpen their skills in the diagnostic process and to improve upon the functioning of their respective groups." The consultants, however, "provided examples and illustrations of process analysis and generally facilitated the establishment of constructive communication and positive relations among the participants" (Walton, 1970:460).

Like the Burtonian model special emphasis was placed on the absence of a fixed agenda, on the basis that this would facilitate flexibility and openness on the part of the participants. Likewise, there was a preference for social scientists as panel members and as consultants. However Doob and his associates differed from Burton who lists as one of his qualifications of a panel member "ignorance of the situation in the sense of having made no prior study of the situation" (Burton, 1969:63). In terms of the role of the consultants, there was also similarity between the models of Doob and Burton. In both cases, their role was defined as 'supportive' and 'analytical'. However, as will be shown later, the application of different analytical and intervention techniques in the models of Burton and Doob had implications for the role of the consultants.

6.4 Methodology and procedures

Within the context of the workshop, the emphasis upon working groups served two essential purposes. First, to improve communication between the two groups and to enhance the coherence of inter-group discussions. Secondly, to increase awareness, tolerance and respect for individual differences. The process of group discussion at first centred on the role of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in the conflict. The 'group process' was designed to facilitate more effective group interaction, and to establish group and individual differences. [10]

During the first phase of the workshop, the basic two Training or T-groups were subjected to three different simulation exercises, each of which lasted between one and one-and-a-half hours. The first simulation involved 'alternative group leadership styles and their effects on group members'. The two remaining simulation exercises structured a situation in which participants were offered the choices of either competing or cooperating with other participants in striving towards common goals. Walton (1970:464) remarks: "These simulation exercises allowed the entire workshop community (participants, consultant and organisers) to explore useful analytical ideas such as interdependence, reciprocity, perceptions, expectations, options - to mention a few".

Thus, these simulation exercises combined with a modified form of sensitivity training [11], were designed to fulfil two overriding purposes, namely : (a) "to help improve the process of managing interpersonal conflict and of building collaboration within the two working groups, and (b) to provide diagnostic concepts relevant to the border disputes" (Walton, 1970:464).

In addition, because these simulation exercises involved subgroups comprised of at least one Ethiopian, one Somali, and one Kenyan (and usually one American),"they had the intended effect of strengthening inter-personal ties across national boundaries"(Doob, 1971:93).

In the case of the Fermeda workshop, the first phase that lasted one week, was almost entirely taken up by the application of socio-psychological techniques such as sensitivity training and simulation (both role and reverse role playing). It was only in the second phase, that specific tasks were assigned to the participants.

[12] The strong emphasis upon the application of techniques, notably of a socio-psychological nature, is in marked contrast to the Burtonian model which emphasises a more basic methodology, namely, the identification of issues and parties, the establishment of communication between parties and the 'control' of communication.

At this point it is important to emphasize that workshops should not be fully equated with T-groups or sensitivity training even though they may draw on some insights derived from these techniques, as in the case of the Fermeda workshop. The overriding objective of the workshop approach is not to increase 'personal sensitivity' (although this may be a consequence of the workshop), or even "to produce inter-personal trust and mutual understanding among the participants as ends in themselves. Rather, the workshops are designed to promote trust and communication" as a means toward the development of an atmosphere in which "creative problem-solving" becomes possible. "Ultimately, the focus is not on the inter-personal relationships between the participants, but on the conflict between their national groups." Therefore, "the real test

of the value of workshops is the extent to which solutions achieved in the group have an impact on the policy process" (Kelman & Cohen, 1976:80).

To recap the procedures and methodology followed during the first phase of Fermeda : from the outset the participants were divided into two T-groups, each including three Somalis, three Kenyans, three Ethiopians, and one or two of the organisers. During the first three days, the T-groups followed standard T-group procedures, aimed at the stimulation of 'self-awareness' and 'constructive communication' among the participants. The consultants did not structure or lead the discussions, but functioned as 'facilitators' and 'interpreters' of the 'group process.' The T-groups selected their own chairmen. During the first phase there were also various meetings of the total group in which theoretical notions about leadership styles and about 'co-operative' and 'competitive strategies' were introduced by the consultants and illustrated by means of simulation exercises. The three simulation exercises["] were designed both to facilitate the working process within the two T-groups and to provide theoretical concepts that could be utilised in later discussions of the actual border disputes." The organisers and consultants did not initiate or control discussions. The participants themselves decided on the agenda for discussion. However, the consultants did facilitate the group process by the introduction of theoretical concepts and techniques.

Thus, during the first phase, the respective meetings did not address any of the substantive issues relating to the border disputes. They focused on individual and group dynamics instead.

During the second phase, the workshop turned specifically to the border disputes. In this phase, the consultants had assigned specific tasks to the two T-groups. These tasks included :

Task I (TI)

"As individual Somalis, Kenyans, Ethiopians list on newsprint (large sheets of paper) key grievances or disputes your people have with each of the other countries", and

Task II (TII)

"On a second sheet of newsprint list your predictions of the grievances or disputes that the individuals from each of the other two countries will bring regarding your country" (Walton, 1970:465).

First, participants met in their three separate national groups. As outlined above, each group was asked to list its own grievances and the grievances of the two other national groups, as they perceived them, and to present these lists to the total group. The procedure did not function satisfactorily, since two of the national groups failed to engage in the required role reversal. Failure was caused largely "because insufficient time was allocated to work through the conflict and process problems necessary in the phases of group growth to develop a useful vehicle out of the total group" (Doob, 1970:129).

In general, the total group made limited progress at this point, and the planning committee (composed of participants, which had since been formed) decided to revert to the original two T-groups to propose 'concrete, solutions.' During the second phase, the general assembly was used for the presentation and practice of brainstorming techniques and for reports of the activities of the

two T-groups. The written lists after having been discussed and completed within the two T-groups, were then brought to a 'diagnostic general meeting' in the main conference room of the Hotel Fermeda. Each of the three national groups had a representative who reported on and clarified their lists. Following these clarifications, the Planning Committee devised an agenda for discussion by the total assembly. This agenda is reproduced below. For this purpose, the assembly was divided into five smaller 'diagnostic groups' (the composition of which was not made clear).

AGENDA AND ISSUES DISCUSSED BY THE ASSEMBLY

Substantive issues discussed

- " Diagnostic Group I: A. What is:
 1. a nation?
 2. a nation-state?
 3. the principle of self-determination?
 B. What is the nature of the problem?
 C. What are the implications of redrawing
 the map of North East Africa?
- Diagnostic Group II: How do these disputes hinder:
 A. Internal development?
 B. Regional development?
- Diagnostic Group III: External influences on these disputes:
 A. Role of the "great" powers.
 B. Role of other nations.
- Diagnostic Group IV: What is the significance of the disputed
 areas to the parties concerned?
- Diagnostic Group V: Summary of solution and possible actions."

Source: Walton (1970:467)

The various conclusions and possible solutions reached within the five diagnostic working groups were discussed at length by the general assembly.

Though the workshop did not arrive at a joint proposal, it did have some positive outcomes. These will now be briefly examined.

6.5 Outcomes

In Walton's view (1970:475), Fermeda represented "technical success as well as failures". While the methods employed have "significant potential", and "because the stakes of war versus peace are so high, any plausible approach deserves a good try."

The overriding purpose of the workshop was to have some "positive influence on the resolution of the border disputes among Somalia, Kenya and Ethiopia." Defined in these terms, the success of the workshop cannot be determined in the short run, and can only loosely be inferred in the longer run if and when such accommodation is reached among the three governments.

There were also clear limitations associated with the Fermeda workshop, especially in terms of two criteria for measuring the immediate effectiveness of the workshop. First, the workshop was unable to reach consensus about a proposed solution. Secondly, the workshop participants did not transfer to the assembly the trust, confidence and problem-solving process it had developed earlier in the two working groups. The participants did not transfer to the assembly the insights and trust gained earlier in the two working groups largely due to the fact that insufficient time was allocated to process and methodological issues in the assembly. One of the trainers, Charles Ferguson, remarked that it

was doubtful whether the African participants "fully understood the complex methodology and techniques used in Fermeda." In addition, he remarks that, "hindsight tells us that we should have known that the success of the two small groups and commitment by each to its product would make the integration of the two products and the two groups into one group that much more difficult" (Doob, 1970:129-130). "However, within the Training groups, some level of trust and openness of communication developed. These yielded, in each of the three national groups, a proposal for resolving the conflict that enjoyed broad support by all group members" (Kelman, 1972:1973).

There were further positive outcomes reported by participants in a follow-up questionnaire designed to help evaluate aspects of the workshop. The questionnaire was administered on the last evening of the workshop and it was to be returned completed, but unsigned, to the organisers not later than the following morning. Fourteen of the eighteen participants responded. [12]

The questionnaires yielded the following interesting results : The participants indicated that they had acquired new 'insight' and knowledge about the cultures and problems of the other parties' perceptions of the dispute, and that they were more 'flexible' to alternative solutions. However, the participants felt that the workshop did not yield many 'innovative ideas' for solving the border disputes.

As far as the process and learning dimensions of the workshop were concerned, the questionnaires showed that :

(a) Learning

The substantive discussion during the first week which included various cross-cultural comparisons, proved

especially educational. Participants were asked, "To what extent have you become better acquainted with the culture and internal problems of the other countries participating in the workshop?" Of the fourteen respondents, five scored their own learning as "moderate", five as "large", and four as "very large". None of the respondents scored the two lower categories, namely, "small extent" or "none at all" (Walton, 1970:476).

Learning was also evident in enhancing understanding of the views and perceptions of the other parties. The questionnaire asked, "To what extent have you gained a better understanding of the views of the other countries toward the dispute?" All fourteen respondents attested to a "very large" or "large" extent. The three lower categories on the questionnaire were not used.

(b) Openness toward solutions

The respondents were asked, "To what extent do you believe members of the workshop have developed more open attitudes toward possible solutions of the dispute?"

The responses were well distributed on the five point scale ranging from "very large extent" to "not at all". The median response indicated that a "moderate increase in the amount of openness toward alternative solutions had been achieved" (Walton, 1970:476).

The respondents expressed mixed and varied opinions on the question as to what extent the workshop produced 'innovative ideas' about the solution of the border conflicts. Seven of the fourteen respondents reported "small extent",

while four reported "moderate extent". Each of the other possible responses - "very large extent", "large extent", and "not at all" - was checked by one respondent each.

(c) Insights into process dimensions

Participants were also asked to what extent the workshop process improved their communication skills. The results indicated a "moderate extent" response, with the majority of the respondents indicating that they have benefitted from the experience.

Roughly a year after the workshop, Doob carried out follow-up interviews with thirteen of the eighteen African participants to gain some impressions of the impact the workshop had on them and on their respective countries. Published in 1971 [13], this follow-up research indicated that their personal experiences (and in some cases to the workshop techniques) were reasonably positive. The majority of the respondents felt 'closer' to the other participants than before the workshop, regardless of nationality, and expressed an eagerness to remain in contact with them. Significantly, most of "the participants showed an understanding of the intense emotional meanings that their respective positions had for each of the parties." On the other hand, their own perceptions and attitudes on how best to resolve the conflicts "were not appreciably affected". As far as the problem of transfer was concerned, the research indicated that news of the workshop reached important officials in each of the three governments, "although most of the participants indicated that they did not make extensive efforts to transfer and communicate their experiences" (Doob, 1971:91-101).

On reflection, it seems that the Fermeda workshop not unlike

the experiences of Burton and his associates, failed to resolve the problem of transfer. Unless the insights gained in the workshop setting can be transferred to the policy-process, the impact of such an exercise remains limited. This also underscores the view that to be of real value, workshops have to be part of a more comprehensive process towards conflict resolution. Workshops are essentially exploratory exercises, aimed at an understanding of the underlying dynamic and causes of conflict.

6.6 Strengths and weaknesses

Commenting on the strengths and limitations of the Fermeda workshop, Wedge (1970:494-496) claims that it was important "from an experimental/methodological point of view". Fermeda demonstrated "that propositional and laboratory types of behavioural science can be brought directly to bear on the concrete realities of human relations at a new and important level, relations between national states" (Wedge, 1970:495). However, Fermeda also demonstrated what "a long way applied behavioural science will have to go before it can hope to find operational utility and application in international conflict resolution."

In posing the question : "What was proved by Fermeda?"

Wedge (1970:494) answers "Only one major proposition", namely :

"...that the small-group processes of the experimental sensitivity workshop are virtually identical whether the participants are representatives of national societies in conflict with one another or are members of the same national society".

In Wedge's view this is an "enormously powerful proposition", for it shows that the small-group encounter can provide a social process capable of challenging "the grip of the

dominant systems of social authority on the attitudes and beliefs of their members, however temporarily or partially". One of the participants in the workshop put his finger on the essence of the issue when he remarked,.. "Our problems are with our own governments" (Doob, 1970:91).

In an interesting and useful analysis of the Fermeda workshop, John Harr (1970:490-492), pleads for more Fermeda's "to test alternative approaches and research designs". In his view, more experimentation with techniques, notably with role-playing exercises, would prove to be useful in this sort of group.

While criticising Walton (1970:453-489) for "incompleteness," especially as far as the actual meaning of "simulation" and "brainstorming" in the workshop context is concerned, he argues that the technique of the listing of grievances that the members of each of the three national groups have, holds considerable promise. A similar technique is also proposed by Anatol Rapoport, John Cohen, Roger Fisher and other scholars as a useful approach to conflict resolution.

Walton, one of the academic consultants in the workshop, remarked that the time allocated for the workshop was "unrealistic" in terms of the objectives set for the workshop. Considerably more time was required to develop working relations, trust and open communication amongst the participants. The other side of the argument, however, would be that a sense of time pressure may well facilitate discussion of central issues and of open communication.

In Walton's view, the Fermeda workshop was too short of time for at least four activities, namely :

- "(i) developing relations within the three national groups;
- (ii) developing the total community (assembly) into a well-functioning group;
- (iii) "sleeping on" the tentative proposed solutions by the two working groups before they were seen as firm and submitted to the assembly; and
- (iv) "retreating from impasses, for example, over the principle of self-determination in order to break the individual mental sets and the polarized social dynamics and thereby allow for new approaches" (Walton, 1970:481).

The assembly itself was characterised by ineffectiveness and failure. In an interview conducted with Leonard Doob [14], the chief initiator of the workshop idea, he gave the following reasons for the failure of the assembly. Firstly, the disruptive actions of one participant, "who attended the various sessions with the express purpose to disrupt proceedings and who was intoxicated most of the time". Secondly, considerable "group rivalry and identity conflict in interpersonal relationships across the two working groups." Thirdly, the existence of divisive tensions within the three national groups (this became apparent during the second phase of the workshop, when alternative solutions were explored); and finally, "the difference in spontaneity between the more individualised working groups and the more politicised general assembly."

As far as the choice of location - the ski Hotel Fermeda in the mountains of northern Italy - was concerned, both Doob and Walton expressed the view that this was a 'favourable' one. In political terms Italy was neutral territory. Secondly, it was

sufficiently isolated in that there were few family or professional work distractions. Both Doob and Walton favour insularity - the idea of a "cultural island", which on their analyses encourages participants "to challenge long-held assumptions, undermine traditional thought processes, and modify attitudes" (Walton, 1970:482). However, as argued elsewhere, the setting of a "cultural island" does nothing to enhance the problems of transfer and re-entry. The paradox is that while the notion of a "cultural island" may be conducive to openness and flexibility, it is essentially artificial and may exacerbate the problem of re-entry, especially when the participants return to their own 'hostile' communities.

While Fermeda was acknowledged as a relatively useful experiment in "informal diplomacy," the outcomes of the exercise were not directly transferred to the policy-makers in the three respective countries. The border conflicts themselves also remained unresolved. However, as an exercise in 'social intervention' based on the ideas and techniques developed by the behavioural sciences, it provided the basis for the improvement and extension of the notion of a workshop. In particular, it proved a valuable learning experience for participants and consultants alike. Doob, for example, maintains that he and his associates in the project have learnt a great deal about "the composition of participant groups, duration, location and goals in organising future workshops". [15]

The results of the Fermeda workshop were mixed. No actual solution to the conflict was achieved, partly due to the failure of the general assembly. However, it did register some success in the following areas : learning (especially in cross-cultural comparisons), understanding the views of the other parties,

openness toward solutions, and insight into the process dimensions of the model. Various problems were also identified, among these :

(1) time duration - there was not enough time to develop the various aspects of the training process; (2) the unity of the parties - a great deal of conflict existed within the three national groups; and (3) lack of enforcement - one individual was disruptive while others displayed a lack of commitment to the process. However, "the exact nature and extent of the impact of the workshop could not be conclusively determined" (Hill, 1982:123).

Perhaps the Fermeda exercise was over-ambitious within the time-frame allocated for it. The reliance on Eurocentric techniques and worldviews limited the chances of success of the experiment, for as Bozeman (1976:15) remarks, "...the inclusion of all the world's nations in one Occidental web of hopes and anxieties has only served to confirm the tendency to think of conflicts, their causes, and their chances of resolution in the context of prevalent Western susceptibilities rather than in those implied from case to case by the realities of the actual foreign situation".

On Bozeman's analysis analogous reasoning has long been evident in "certain politically crucial" academic disciplines.

"Too many of the norms, models, and social laws for which absolute validity is being claimed in the ranks of sociologists, political scientists, economists, psychologists, and lawyers, are actually abstractions of exclusively Western patterns of thought and life."
(Bozeman, 1976:15).

Far too few of these "general truths" have been critically examined and tested in the light of Third World reality. "The presumption of a universal accord on values related to conflict - largely

uncontested in the mid-twentieth century - has done much to obfuscate our understanding of conflict and its dynamics in non-Western contexts."

Subsequently, Doob and Foltz organised a second workshop, known as Stirling, to investigate the conflict in Northern Ireland. In the remaining part of this chapter, the Stirling workshop will be critically examined.

6.7 Stirling - analysing conflict in Northern Ireland

The Stirling workshop, held in August 1972, at the University of Stirling in Scotland, to analyse the conflict in Northern Ireland, was not based on a model akin to the one used earlier in Fermeda. Here, the attempt was not to intervene centrally in the conflict in the sense of an attempt at conflict resolution, but rather at conflict analysis.

In the case of Stirling, fifty-six Protestant and Catholic residents of Belfast assisted by a team of American social scientists met in Stirling, Scotland, for a ten-day workshop. [16] The Stirling workshop has generated lively debate both on the scientific merits of the techniques used and on the ethical issues involved in analysing ongoing violent conflicts.

"Utilizing an intervention design which combined Tavistock and National Training laboratory group dynamics approaches, a panel of seven American social scientists attempted to assist the residents of Belfast to learn about their behaviour in organized groups and to improve their understanding of their political opponent's position". [17] The workshop also attempted "to provide a relatively protected framework wherein participants might explore

modes of inter-communal communication and co-operation that could later be tried in Belfast" (Doob & Foltz, 1973:489).

This part of the chapter attempts to introduce the background to the conflict, describe the rationale behind the intervention, and to analyse the methods employed and the difficulties encountered in the enterprise. It also offers an indication on what was accomplished.

6.7.1 Background to the conflict

The conflict in Northern Ireland has been typified as "peculiarly destructive and apparently intractable" (Rose, 1971:5). Basically it stems from a "society divided by a cumulative dichotomy involving religion, politics, culture, and ever-recent history" (Doob & Foltz, 1973:489). Though they constitute 65 per cent of Northern Ireland's total population, the Protestant majority feels itself a minority on the island as a whole with an uncertain border as its only protection against the permanent minority status which the Catholic population now endure as a direct consequence of that border (Rose, 1976; Harris, 1972).

Under the Northern Ireland government at Stormont, established in 1920, the Catholic minority has been subjected to both symbolic and real discrimination. However, at the same time, many Protestants have expressed the fear that any basic changes in the structure of authority could result in calling "the border" into question, and in doing so, challenge the legitimacy of the government. "Furthermore, this view is regularly reaffirmed by Catholic nationalist sentiment asserting that such, indeed, is the only realistic solution to the present conflict" (Doob & Foltz, 1973:490).

Despite this dominant bi-polar conflict, neither side is homogenous. The Protestants are fragmented into various religious groupings and sects. This religious competition finds special expression in the Orange Order, symbol of United Protestant opposition to Roman Catholicism. The Order itself, however, makes for another cleavage within the Protestant community. Although Protestants have traditionally voted overwhelmingly for the Unionist Party, the Party itself has fallen prey to fractional ideological competition. More recently, political organisations such as that of the Rev. Ian Paisley and paramilitary formations such as the Ulster Defense Association and the Ulster Volunteer Force rendered Protestant politics more competitive than co-operative. On the Catholic side, religion has proved less fractional, but political and economic competition between various strands of socialism, nationalism, and republicanism, now clearly visible in the split of the Irish Republican Army (IRA) into 'Official' and 'Provisional' wings, has rivalled the Protestants in fervour and complexity.

"Social class divisions intersect religious cleavages and reflect the industrialised economy to which Northern Ireland belongs. Both trade union membership and class awareness are high by British and West European standards. Class cleavages have contributed to and exacerbated both factionalism and distrust within the two dominant groupings' (Harris, 1972: 5-10); Hull, 1976; Hepburn, 1980 and Gallagher, 1974).

Attempts by the Civil Rights Movements of the mid-1960s to forge an alliance between the Protestant and Catholic groupings, proved largely unsuccessful. While the Alliance Party has managed to attract an inter-denominational following of middle-class

intellectuals, it has been denounced "as a band of traitors" by working-class Protestants and by Catholic republicans alike (Doob & Foltz, 1973:491-2).

The British government's suspension of the separate Northern Ireland government in 1972, if anything, exacerbated fragmentation on each side and resulted in the fact that the initiative went over to more extreme groupings and individuals such as the Rev. Ian Paisley and the two wings of the Irish Republican Army (IRA). The conflict itself became more serious with banditry as well as a series of seemingly random and sectarian killings. These killings provided a source of continuing concern for both Catholic and Protestant groupings, which have been no more able than the Royal Ulster Constabulary to bring them under control. With growing internecine conflict, the British Government intervened militarily in Northern Ireland, while political control reverted back to Westminster (Hull, 1976:16; Magee, 1974).

6.8 Research setting

In designing the Stirling workshop, Doob and his associates sought to profit from both John Burton's Cyprus workshop (1969) and from their own Fermeda workshop (1970). Based on their and Burton's previous experience, it became clear to them that "no single technique or combination of techniques is suitable or even relevant in all situations; the selection must be made by considering the objective of the workshop as well as the participant's background" (Doob & Foltz, 1973:492).

In June 1971, Doob and Foltz left for Belfast, where they interviewed a number of people occupying different positions in the society and representing various shades of political opinion.

Because neither Doob nor Foltz have had any previous experience in Northern Ireland, they established contact by way of intermediaries. One of John Burton's former graduate students was especially helpful, because he was conducting research in Belfast. In addition, Doob and Foltz also made use of the services and advice of local clergymen from both sides of the political divide, colleagues at Yale, a native of Ulster, various academics attached to Queens University in Belfast, and others in the medical and psychiatric professions.

The objective of the workshop was a fairly modest one, namely :

"...To bring together persons of influence in two of the strife-torn neighbourhoods in order to have them establish some degree of mutual trust and then to develop plans for establishing or improving relations between them" (Doob & Foltz, 1973:492).

The approach and strategy pursued was, therefore, a 'decentralised one' which did not attempt to influence national decision-makers, nor to produce a 'manifesto' which could affect public opinion. The primary goal of the workshop was conflict analysis rather than conflict resolution. Stirling was meant to be a learning exercise, both for the individual participants and for the group as a whole.

During the academic year of 1971-1972, Doob and Foltz succeeded in getting financial support from two private foundations and a private donor. The remainder of the funds came from Yale University. They then formed a planning group at Yale and, thus, unlike their first East African workshop, they could decide upon details in advance among colleagues conveniently based at the same

institution. The planning group consisted of Doob, Foltz and two clinical psychologists based at Yale, Edward B. Klein and James C. Miller.

In June 1972, amidst continuing conflict, Doob, Foltz, Klein and Miller returned to Belfast on the advice of their local observers. They put forward three criteria for the recruitment of participants to the workshop. First, participants had to be influential within the Belfast community at grass-roots level. (Membership in established interest organisations such as those concerned with community development, housing, labour, playgrounds, education and politics served as criterium here). Secondly, participants had to be interested in cooperating with the other side, and finally, "seemingly emotionally stable and capable of a basic flexibility" (Doob & Foltz, 1973:494).

Doob and his associates encountered problems to recruit suitable participants. In this they obtained the support of a department at Queens University (so that the eventual sponsors became Yale "in association with" that department and numerous established religious and community leaders). They also prepared a document entitled a "Preliminary Announcement of a Training conference" which was to be given to all potential participants.

Its opening paragraph under the heading of "Purpose" read as follows:-

"People meet in groups and larger communities to accomplish most important everyday tasks. Such groups may either help or prevent them from achieving their goals. We propose to give from 40 to 60 citizens of Belfast :

- (1) The experience of learning what happens and what can happen when they participate in groups which they themselves form or which are formed before their own eyes.
- (2) An opportunity to explore whether they can then create for themselves ways of working in groups that will aid them in achieving goals of their own choice relating to the conflict in Belfast.
- (3) Whatever aid we can offer over several months in working out concrete, practical projects back home" (Doob & Foltz, 1973:495).

The said document also informed prospective participants that the workshop would take place at Stirling University in Scotland from 19 to 28 August, 1972, and that the transport and accommodation costs would be covered from private sources in the United States.

Stirling University was selected for practical as well as theoretical reasons. Practically, Scotland was acceptable to everyone as 'neutral territory'. Theoretically, Stirling provided an environment for the participants to detach themselves from the conflict. Stirling could be reached by ferry and, hence, travel expenses would be low, and participants were not required to obtain travel documents which would have been needed on the continent. The proposed design of the workshop was also included in the document, and explained in operational (practical), non-technical terms.

In the course of the next two months, the two chief consultants, Klein and Miller, recruited participants in terms of their previously agreed upon criteria. They also explained the nature of the workshop to the participants. They emphasized the

confidential nature of the entire exercise. It was decided not to reveal the identities of the participants. In addition, there would be no publicity given to the workshop in the mass media.

6.8.1 Domain assumptions

As pointed out earlier, Stirling was not based on a model akin to the one used earlier in the Fermeda workshop. Stirling did not intervene centrally in the sense of an attempt at conflict resolution or termination. Rather, the Stirling workshop was informed by the following assumptions : (a) That "any long-term resolution of the conflict would necessitate various local groups and individuals taking more rather than less control over the circumstances of their own lives", (b) That "self-knowledge and knowledge of circumstance" can be beneficial to bring about this control, and (c) That "direct communication between the parties most directly involved in the conflict is bound to produce the most broadly supported solution" (Alevy et al., 1974:277).

6.8.2 Composition

Fifty six participants eventually participated in the Stirling workshop. With one exception the participants were all well-known community leaders in Belfast. Several belonged to what the participants themselves called "activist organisations" on both sides of the divide. Although none was a political figure of standing, one had earlier held political office and six were relatively well-known public figures in Belfast and Northern Ireland by virtue of their positions in trade unions, religious and community organisations. Six held positions in the civil

service. Roughly a quarter might loosely be described as "middle-class in social background and life style"; the rest of the participants were workers or workers' wives and children, several of them unemployed. Slightly over half of the them were Protestants, the rest Catholics. The male-female ratio was 5 to 3, while the approximate age range was from 16 to 60.

Apart from Klein and Miller, the two chief consultants, three other consultants from the United States participated, Daniel I. Alevy, Barbara B. Bunker, and Nancy French. The number of consultants was determined by the size of the group from Belfast (Doob & Foltz, 1973:496).

6.8.3 Methodology and process dimensions

The first half of the workshop (the first five days) was used to familiarise the participants with the Tavistock technique, "The essence of which is to increase learning about the ways in which people interact in organised groups" (Miller & Rice, 1967). The participants were asked to confront directly the ways in which they respond to authority and the challenges of co-operative team work. During the first five days, the consultants deliberately maintained a low profile both in formal and informal settings.

The Tavistock technique, however, was modified first by assigning participants to "introductory groups". These groups were first constituted on the basis of sex, followed by religion and age. These "introductory groups" discussed issues "that brought home the importance of role play in the genesis and functioning of conflict relationships". After an explanatory exposition by Klein, the director of this phase, the participants were assigned to small

working groups, each of which contained a cross-section of the participants and one of the consultants.

These small working groups met on five occasions. They had no fixed agenda or expressed purpose except "to study the group's behaviour". The consultants only intervened to explain and interpret some aspect of group behaviour. During the Tavistock phase, the participants came together three times in a large group, whose agenda was similarly unstructured. During these three meetings, the entire staff was present. Again the consultants intervened and interpreted to the participants what was going on. In the 'big intergroup exercise,' all the participants first assembled in a single room and were instructed to form whatever smaller working groups they wished in order 'to study and analyse group dynamics.' Five additional sessions allowed the working groups to develop internal cohesion and to interact with other groups. Finally, as a transition to the second phase of the workshop, "application groups" were formed on the basis of the neighbourhoods in Belfast from which the participants came. Clearly, then, the overriding purpose of the first phase of the workshop was to enable the participants to learn more about group dynamics and behaviour. "This process was facilitated by the establishment of smaller working groups, and by constantly changing the composition of these groups" (Doob & Foltz, 1973:497).

The second phase of the workshop, which lasted four days, conformed more or less to the methodology and process associated with the National Training Laboratories or the Bethel approach (Bradford, et al., 1964). The aim of the second phase of the workshop, was to give participants an opportunity "to plan back

home activities in some detail and to both develop and practice specific skills which might aid in the realization of these plans" (Doob & Foltz, 1973:498).

During this phase, specific planning groups were formed on the basis of problems identified by the participants themselves. Various exercises were conducted in these planning groups, including some role-playing and a simulation exercise in the form of a game (the 'Money Tree Game') which reflected the struggle between the "have's" and the "have-nots". After a review on the last day of the workshop, the "application groups" from the first phase of the workshop were reconstituted for a single session so that previously formulated projects for Belfast could be examined again. During this session special emphasis was placed on the problem of re-entry.

The Stirling workshop operated on a tight schedule. Each of the smaller or larger group sessions lasted approximately an hour-and-a-half. Two such sessions were held in the morning, two in the afternoon, and one in the evening. The participants were subjected to constant pressure. Only four breaks during the duration of the workshop were provided for.

Copious notes were kept by the two chief organisers, Doob and Foltz, especially of the first phase of the workshop. Discussions by the entire staff of all sessions were recorded on tape. The participants were asked to give their opinions of the workshop to a series of questions handed to each participant on the return journey. No recording was done during the actual sessions of the working groups.

6.9 Outcomes

In contrast with the Fermeda workshop, where participants analysed group dynamics in order to facilitate a resolution of the conflict, at Stirling "process" itself was studied for its own sake.

Therefore, Stirling provided for four types of learning, namely :

(a)'Learning about process,' (b)'Learning about individual behaviour,' (c)'Learning about others,'and (d)'Learning about projects.' Each of these four types of learning will now be briefly examined.

(a) Learning about process

Much of the learning involved the issues of 'authority,' 'power', and 'leadership'. The Tavistock technique was selected primarily because it is designed to enable participants to confront these issues. Doob and his associates selected Tavistock, because they had concluded that these issues had to be confronted in the Belfast situation.

"At the outset the participants were forced into an ambiguous authority situation!" They were subjected to an immutable time schedule and told that "members are free to do whatever they want". The consultants issued no directives, they never addressed the group on an individual basis, but always as a whole.

In the view of Doob and Foltz, the assumption of the need for legitimate authority "came so naturally to participants that its exposure in the sessions became a powerful learning aid" (Doob & Foltz, 1973:500).

In addition to authority and power issues, the workshop participants had to confront the fact and reality of conflict and the way they traditionally dealt with it. In this context, one of the major difficulties encountered in the workshop was that of the "externalisation" of conflict. Many of the participants externalised responsibility for it, by arguing that "they were all victims", and on account of this, they could not be held responsible for their actions or those of the other parties. This "externalisation" of the conflict seriously undermined the learning process.

In addition to "authority" and "conflict", participants also had to confront the complex problems of 'group loyalty', 'identity', and 'boundaries'. "Throughout the entire duration of the workshop, the participants perceived themselves as being divided into two religious groupings. Socio-economic cleavages based on profession, social class, place of residence, political activism, and organizational competence asserted themselves, though they never completely submerged the dominant religious cleavage" (Doob & Foltz, 1973:503). Consequently," the participants never developed a sense of group cohesion necessary for joint co-operation and action."

(b) Learning about individual behaviour

The workshop provided an informal setting in which participants could learn about their own individual behaviour. In the opinion of the organisers of the workshop, "it taught the individual participants that it is possible to have multiple identities and to interact in different roles at different times" (Alevy, et al., 1974:279).

(c) Learning about others

One of the objectives of the workshop was to expose participants to the views of "the other side", to facilitate both inter- and intra-group communication. While the workshop did not adequately provide for inter- and intra-group learning and communication, largely due to the problems of 'externalisation' and leadership, some learning was shared. When it became clear to the participants that they shared doubts, frustrations, fears and weaknesses, this provided an incentive for mutual learning.

(d) Learning about projects

The Stirling workshop further attempted to assist participants in developing practical projects among themselves that they might be able to implement in their respective Belfast communities. The various planning groups, formed during the second phase of the workshop, with both Protestant and Catholic members, considered various areas of functional cooperation. These included : "community centre development; joint housing rehabilitation and joint development of a playground area to be used by children from both religious groupings" (Alevy, et al., 1974:279-280).

In addition, a working group generally referred to as the "politicals" was established to work out some areas of common interest and concern to both sides of the divide. However, no real progress was made, especially as the workshop was constantly under pressure and stress. A major source of stress was the constant stream of disturbing news reports of events in Belfast, where the

conflict took a turn for the worst. Moreover, many participants reported some degree of 'disorientation', especially during the Tavistock phase of the workshop. The consultants also complained about constant 'pressure' and 'stress'.

Given these limitations and the fact that the results were at best uncertain, should the project have been undertaken? Doob and his associates answer strongly in the affirmative. Noting - rather controversially, that "from the point of view of scholarly ethics, only one position to the Northern Ireland conflict totally avoids criticism : to do nothing".

Doob and his associates were also criticized for undertaking the workshop "as foreigners". To this criticism, they responded as follows : "Firstly, no one in Belfast was attempting anything of the sort, and the few local scholars indicated that their institutional affiliations precluded such an enterprise". Secondly, the fact that they were foreigners assisted in a number of ways. "They were neither Catholics nor Protestants, they were Americans and their neutrality was unquestioned" (Doob & Foltz, 1973: 510).

Nine months after the Stirling workshop, Doob and Foltz interviewed 40 of the original 56 participants to determine the outcome and impact of the exercise. Emphasis was placed upon the changes they had observed within themselves, upon the cooperative projects they had planned during the workshop, and upon their own general effectiveness in their own communities (Doob & Foltz, 1974:237-256). By their own admission, the results were largely 'inconclusive,' although some of the interviewees indicated that they had benefitted personally from the exercise.

However, these interviews did not yield systematic informa-

tion on the impact of the workshop. Doob and Foltz only had the names and addresses of the participants, and arranged for the interviews telephonically. Most of the interviews took place in the individuals' homes. Six interviews were conducted in the hotel where Doob and Foltz stayed, and in three cases the place of work was selected.

Among the 40 participants interviewed, "all but one were able to recall vividly and systematically details of the exercises during the workshop. They could recall specific incidents, while some of the National Training Laboratory (NTL) exercises, notably the so-called "Money Tree Game", was mentioned repeatedly. Generally, the role of the consultants impressed those interviewed. "All 40 also recalled their own actions, thoughts and feelings during the workshop" (Doob & Foltz, 1974:243).

In the opinion of Doob and Foltz (1974:244), "the participant's recall demonstrated that whatever else Stirling might have been for them it was not an insignificant event". Most of the participants assessed the overall experience of the workshop in positive terms. An unspecified small number assessed the workshop as (a) "having good and bad elements balanced", (b) "bad elements outweighing the good", and (c) "as an overall bad idea or an experience they regret".

The results of these interviews indicated that the workshop was seriously flawed in respect of the objectives and nature of the exercise. Most participants had the impression that they would be attending a conventional conference on Northern Ireland. Moreover, the majority felt that they had no frame of reference to help them to assess the usefulness and outcome of the workshop.

Most of the participants interviewed indicated that the workshop generated "considerable stress". However, most also agreed that the stress was useful to the learning process, because they became more conscious of "the hostility and cruelty within themselves".

Based on these interviews, it became clear that some significant personal learning did take place. First, many reported "increased self-confidence." Secondly, an unspecified number reported "greater awareness of self and of one's own potentialities". Finally, a few reported "substantial personal changes" (Doob & Foltz, 1974:248). As far as social learning and group behaviour were concerned, the workshop had rather more limited impact. Some participants, however, reported some change in political allegiance, and indicated that the workshop strengthened "moderation" in their political views (Doob & Foltz, 1974:249).

For a variety of reasons - notably the nature of the conflict in Northern Ireland itself and its impact upon workshop proceedings - few definitive conclusions can be drawn concerning the outcome and the impact of the Stirling workshop. The stress generated in the Tavistock phase of the workshop proved to be emotionally destabilising for most of the participants, although it also stimulated learning amongst others. Stirling only marginally increased the analytical and practical skills of the participants, although it did improve personal contacts and provided for personal learning.

Having examined the research setting, rationale, process, methodology and outcomes of the Stirling workshop, the focus now moves to a critique of the workshop.

6.10 Critique

The Stirling workshop was criticized on both substantive and methodological grounds. But unlike Fermeda or Burton's earlier workshops, the issue of the ethics of social intervention itself became of central concern because of the harmful impact of the workshop on some of the participants.

In a critical review of the Stirling workshop, Boehringer et al., (1974:257-276) assessed the methodology, process, and subsequent social and political impact of the workshop. On their analysis, the goals of the workshop were "ill-defined and mutually contradictory". The goal to "give the participants greater knowledge of how groups and organizations function", contradicted with the objective "to enhance self-knowledge and greater competence in own behaviour" (Boehringer, et al., 1974:258). Boehringer et al., argued that manifest antagonism on the part of the participants towards the idea of a workshop, and the fact that the organisers failed to clarify the goals and workings of the workshop, "meant that the workshop was ineffective in its own terms and harmful to many of the participants" (Boehringer, et al., 1974:274). This latter criticism was born out by some interviews conducted with 40 participants some nine months after the workshop (Doob & Foltz, 1974:246).

A related but more serious problem, is that of whether Doob and his associates should have intervened at that particular stage in the internecine conflict? Given the antagonism towards them and their project, and the seriousness and destructiveness of the conflict itself, the usefulness of social scientific research, notably of an interventionist kind, seems rather limited. Doob and

his associates argue that they have been sensitive about this question, and "therefore followed procedures adapted to the problem and circumstances at hand" (Alevy et al., 1974:278). However, this does not address, let alone resolve, the deeper problem of the ethics of social intervention. It remains an open, and to some extent, an unresolved question whether it is desirable for social scientists (in this case foreign social scientists) to intervene in a conflict noted for its intractable and destructive nature? At the very least, it seems that the prospects of workshops of the Stirling variety to enhance both conflict analysis and resolution, under such circumstances as those that prevailed in Northern Ireland at the time, are inherently limited. The application of social psychological techniques such as brainstorming and Tavistock may well have increased the personal and collective trauma and disorientation of the participants. [18]

Stirling was also criticized for its "experimental" and "artificial" nature. While an isolated context was selected so that learning could take place without the distractions of Belfast, this did not benefit the problem of transfer or "re-entry". The problem of sustaining the learning acquired within the context of the workshop and transferring it to the respective communities remained an unresolved problem at Stirling. As far as learning itself is concerned, the Stirling workshop did not enhance the group process in the sense of providing for 'co-operative ventures'. Learning was essentially confined to individual participants, while changes in individual perceptions and values were not shared by the group as a whole.

Doob and his associates were also criticized for their use of "experimental techniques" such as Tavistock and techniques devised by the National Training Laboratory (NTL) in the United States. To this, they reply that the justification for the use of a combination of Tavistock and NTL training dates back more than twenty years, when Bennis and Shepard (1956) developed a variety of techniques while working at Bethel, Maine, at the National Training Laboratories. Bennis and Shepard noted that when groups met, the first issue which had to be addressed for effective training purposes was the authority of the leader." Once the authority structure was established, it was possible for the individual participants to improve their own interpersonal relations" (Bennis & Shepard, 1956:415-437). Bennis and Shepard's pioneering work has been further developed at Yale University, in theory by Klein and Astrachan (1971), research (Harrow et al., 1971), and application (Klein and Gould, 1973). [19]

Doob and his associates defend and justify their use of Tavistock and NTL techniques on the ground that both are "experiential methods that enable participants to learn about psychological processes". Thousands have participated in events of this nature, notably in the United States of America. Moreover, Klein and all the other consultants in the Stirling workshop had experience with both of these techniques of social intervention. However, none of the consultants had previously used the combination of Tavistock and NTL techniques in conflict situations as destructive and intense as Northern Ireland. While the workshop design was intentionally modified in response to local conditions, for example, "introductory groups" were established at the beginning of the

workshop rather than immediately starting with 'group process;' nonetheless the combination of these techniques generated considerable stress in the participants.

The Stirling workshop also underlined the risks and dangers which face participants in an exercise once they have returned to their respective constituencies. In the case of Stirling, one of the participants was killed for participating in the workshop.

A more fundamental and interesting problem, from a theoretical point of view, which has been ignored by Doob and his associates, is whether there are any crucial stages during a conflict interaction when Tavistock (or any other mediatory attempt) is sought and welcomed by the participants, and whether there is any particular stage when Tavistock or NTL techniques are most effective in having a significant impact on the subsequent course of the conflict interaction?

In the light of the Stirling workshop," such a stage (if it could ever be accurately determined) would be likely to occur when the attitudes and perceptions of both parties are in the process of becoming less rigid and more open to change - a time when any new insights should have maximum effect and could be communicated with the least likely damage to those who are presenting them" (Private communication by C.R. Mitchell, London, 1983).

By their own admission, Stirling was too concerned with 'methodological and technical issues'. Time allocated for inter-group learning was too limited in relation to the total schedule of the workshop. In fact, the time allocated for the workshop proved to be insufficient to allow for learning within the bigger assembly. While on the issue of time, Doob admitted in an interview that in retrospect, their intervention at Stirling was 'highly inappropriate.' [20]

Another substantive problem relating to the Stirling workshop is that of ascertaining whether the new insights gained during the workshop were retained when the participants returned to their respective communities, or whether the considerable pressures on each individual made him/her revert to his/her original perceptions of the conflict and of the other party involved? There is an associated problem here. Even if changed perceptions were indeed retained, were these successfully communicated to relevant decision-makers? The follow-up research conducted by Doob and Foltz (1974:237-257) fails to shed light upon these questions.

Finally, the efficacy of the workshop approach as a technique for the analysis and resolution of conflict needs to be evaluated on two counts. First, problems which arise from the techniques used in the workshop. Morespecifically, whether or not these worked effectively in changing the attitudes and perceptions of those individuals that participated in the exercise. Secondly, problems relating to the actual impact of the workshop on the substantive conflict.

On both of these counts the success and outcome of the Stirling workshop were mixed. Follow-up research indicated that both Tavistock and National Training Techniques (NT) proved to be traumatic and thus harmful to the participants. With reference to the second question, it needs to be pointed out that Stirling was not intended as an attempt at conflict resolution. The goal of the workshop was 'conflict analysis'. However, as argued previously, it has had limited impact upon the substantive conflict.

Having considered the research setting, methodology and process dimensions of the Stirling workshop, the chapter concludes

with a comparison of the workshops of Burton and Doob and their associates.

6.11 The two approaches compared

In comparing the two approaches - and particularly in examining the differences between them - it is important to remember that neither one represents a set of rigidly worked out procedures. Both approaches are seen by their initiators as "exploratory", as open to further refinement and improvement." The two approaches reflect different points of departure and experiences."

On the analysis of Kelman (1972:168-204), there "is every reason to assume that the two approaches can borrow from each other and be combined in various ways". Kelman, treat them as "two variants of a more general model, each applicable to a specific set of problems and circumstances".

The models of Burton and Doob share some common features as well as differences. First, we examine the common features, and then proceed to discuss the differences between the two approaches.

6.11.1 Common features

Kelman (1972:168-204), identifies six common features shared by the two approaches. Each of these will now be briefly outlined.

(1) Setting

In both approaches, "workshops take place in settings isolated from political and diplomatic environments." The Fermeda workshop took place in a physically-isolated setting - a ski-resort in the mountains of Northern Italy.

The Stirling workshop was held in an academic setting. Burton's London exercise took place in an academic setting, removed from the pressures and publicity normally associated with official negotiations.

"The rationale behind an isolated setting is that it facilitates the process of learning, and enables the participants to explore issues relatively free from the pressures and constraints of their respective constituencies." However, as pointed out earlier, the notion of "a cultural island" may well complicate the problem of transfer.

(2) Sponsorship

Both types of workshops were sponsored by academic organisations, independent of governmental or inter-governmental agencies. The governments concerned were in every case informed and consulted and, in fact, gave their approval of the workshops, but the workshops enjoyed no official status. The planning and organisation of the Fermeda workshop were greatly aided, however, by the United National Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR).

(3) Participants

Although the two approaches differed markedly in the criteria for selecting participants, the respective participants shared two common features. First, they were all members of standing within their respective communities, who at least potentially (in the London exercise quite clearly and, indeed, by the nature of their selection) had access to decision-makers. Secondly, they participated in

the workshops as private citizens who spoke on nobody else's behalf. 'The respective participants are not official, instructed delegates, but private individuals'. This has both advantages and disadvantages for workshop dynamics. It had the advantage that participants, at least theoretically, were more flexible because they did not constitute decision-makers themselves. However, it did complicate the problem of transfer, and resulted in an 'experimental' rather than a 'practical' exercise.

(4) Interpersonal atmosphere

In the respective workshops the discussions and research settings were designed to create an informal atmosphere in which participants would be free to express their views openly and to get to know and respect each other as individuals. This atmosphere of informality fostered mutual trust, a sense of shared values, and in some cases, a commitment to a common goal. However, as far as the latter aspect was concerned, Stirling failed to formulate a common task capable of transcending religious and communal cleavages..

(5) Discussion format

The respective workshops of Burton and Doob provided for direct, face-to-face communication among the conflicting parties. In all cases the agenda was relatively unstructured. The initiative for introducing issues, or for pursuing inputs made by the third parties, were largely left to the participants themselves. On the whole, third parties refrained from imposing their definitions of the respective

conflicts on the participants; rather, they encouraged participants to speak for themselves - to articulate their motives and perceptions, express their own hopes and fears. "In particular, the workshops operated on the premise that solutions must be generated within the group discussions, rather than be imposed from the outside (Kelman, 1972:176)."

(6) Role of third parties

The various research attempts of Burton and Doob were under the overall direction of third parties. "These were defined in terms of their professional skills and knowledge as theoretical or applied behavioural scientists rather than in terms of some official capacity as mediators". Though the third parties participated in the proceedings, "their primary task was to provide useful theoretical tools that the participants could use in their discussions and analyses, to introduce relevant information and suggest interpretations, and to facilitate group dynamics in other ways. In short, they played a role akin to that of the psychotherapist. And like psychotherapists, they tried to maintain 'analytical' rather than 'evaluative' and 'prescriptive' attitudes towards the participant's judgements."

In the above view of Kelman (1972:177), these common characteristics of the two approaches were essentially designed to achieve two objectives. "First, and most importantly, they are designed to give participants the freedom, opportunity, and the motivation to move away from official positions and from attempts to justify their own sides and "score points against the other side". Instead, the objective is for the participants to absorb new information,

explore new ideas, revise their perceptions, reassess their attitudes, and participate in a process of creative problem-solving. The isolated setting, the academic sponsorship, the deliberate encouragement of self-expression and of an analytical orientation, and the inputs of the third party all are aimed at facilitating these processes" (Kelman, 1972:177).

Secondly, "some common characteristics of both approaches are designed to enhance the prospect that the new information and ideas, the changed perceptions and attitudes, and the proposals for solution generated by the workshop will be fed into the policy process. The selection of potentially influential participants, the co-ordination with their governments, and the format of the workshops are geared to achieving this objective. Both approaches are more effectively designed to produce changes in individual perceptions and attitudes than to feed such changes into the policy process - although the balance between these two objectives is one respect in which the two approaches differ from each other."

Having concerned ourselves with the similarities between the two approaches, the focus now moves to the differences between the work of Burton and Doob.

6.11.2 Differences between the two approaches

In terms of the six elements used to outline common features of the two approaches, various useful distinctions can be drawn. The following six distinctions seem especially useful :

- (1) The Fermeda workshop, held in a physically isolated setting, placed greater emphasis on creating a "cultural island" and on the 'psychological insulation' of the participants, than either Stirling or the London workshop.

- (2) The London workshop was sponsored by a research centre concerned with international relations theory, diplomacy, and the analysis of conflict, representing a research project within that centre's ongoing research programme. In contrast, the Fermeda workshop was supported by social scientists interested in African studies and assisted by specialists in small group dynamics. Both Fermeda and Stirling represented "an experimental application of a group training laboratory to conflict resolution."
- (3) Participants in the London workshop were considerably closer to the process of foreign policy-making and came as a team. Participants in both Fermeda and Stirling were further removed from the foreign policy process and came as individuals, "thus reflecting greater division, fractiousness and diversity within the respective national groupings."
- (4) Compared to the other workshops (London and Stirling), the Fermeda exercise, placed more emphasis on the creation of cross-cultural and cross-national unity within the working group.
- (5) To establish communication between the participants and discussion of the substantive issues in conflict, the London workshop made greater use of theoretical models of conflict. "In contrast, the Fermeda and Stirling workshops focused more centrally on the ongoing group process and on inter-personal behaviour." In the discussion of the substantive issues themselves, the Fermeda workshop placed greater emphasis upon an agreed-upon proposal for the resolution of the conflict than both Stirling or the London workshop.

- (6) The extent and nature of the theoretical inputs from the social scientists also differed in the various workshops. In the London workshop, the social scientist made "more theoretical inputs, both in their own presentations and in their interventions." In both the Fermeda and Stirling workshops, the social scientists provided more inputs in the form of feedback based on their observation and interpretation of the group process. The social scientists were also more active in organising the workshop activities "in setting the tasks to which the participants were to devote their energies" (Kelman, 1972:177-178).

These differences in operation and detail reflect certain underlying differences between the two approaches, both in their conception of the exercise as well as in their definition of the workshop task. They differ in their views of the workshop's relationship to the larger and more comprehensive process of conflict resolution, and in their views of what ought to be done within the workshop itself. Our exposition of these differences may be overtly sharp, but it should be useful in underlining the unique qualities of each approach.

How do these approaches differ, first, in their conceptions of the exercise? "Both are concerned with creating an atmosphere in which change - in the form of altered perceptions and attitudes and creative solutions - can take place, in the hope that these changes can be fed into the political process of conflict resolution". However, the two approaches seem to differ in their conceptions of precisely where the workshop fits into these political processes.

In Burton's conception, the workshop is much more closely linked to national and international political processes. The concept of 'controlled communication' flows from a theoretical orientation toward international relations, containing such propositions as the following : that "international conflict is a spillover from internal or communal strife" (Burton, 1969:17); 1984:3-15); that "the starting point in analysis and resolution of conflict is at the systems level of highest interaction" (Burton, 1969:19), and that "since the resolution of conflict depends upon effective communication, it can come only from the parties themselves. Processes are required that alter perceptions, and promote the points of view of the parties, and not of third parties" (Burton, 1969:55). In Burton's view, then, procedures like those of controlled communication represent key preparatory steps in the resolution of conflict.

In keeping with this conception, Burton's workshops are coordinated with the relevant decision-makers. The participants are individuals who are aware of the positions of these decision-makers. Though they need not be officials themselves (and they do not attend in any official capacity), they are nominated by the relevant decision-makers and maintain contact with them before and after the exercise. "Burton himself, both before and after the workshop tries to establish and maintain contact with the relevant governmental and inter-governmental agencies. The Burtonian workshops also last much longer than those organised by Doob and his associates" (Kelman, 1972:179).

Both the Stirling and Fermeda workshops were further removed from the political process. Though Doob and his associates communi-

cated with the governments concerned, their purpose was to inform the governments and get their approval, rather than to co-ordinate directly with decision-makers themselves.

Both Burton and Doob attempted to hold their respective workshops in settings isolated from political and diplomatic pressures, but Doob placed greater emphasis on separating the workshop exercise from the political process.

"In Doob's conception, a workshop can contribute to conflict resolution by generating certain outcomes that can then be fed into the policy process. The workshop itself is not directly linked to national decision-making or diplomatic efforts at conflict resolution" (Kelman, 1972-180).

The difference between Burton's and Doob's conceptions of the workshop exercise thus has important implications for what the workshop is intended to accomplish. Kelman (1972:180-181), comments succinctly :

"For Doob, it is a more self-contained exercise, failing or succeeding in terms of its own goals and procedures. There is, therefore, more emphasis on the personal learning of the participants. There is also more emphasis on producing an agreed-upon solution, in the form of a document that can serve as an input into the policy process. For Burton, too, it is significant to produce changes in the participants and to promote problem-solving. However, these effects are viewed as steps in the process of conflict resolution more than as ends in themselves. There is less emphasis on the personal learning of the participants, except insofar as it influences the new information and insights that can be fed into the policy process. Similarly, there is less emphasis on the reaching of agreed-upon agreements within the workshop itself. The view of Burton is that the actual working out of solutions must happen elsewhere; the workshop will have made its contribution if it has brought some possibilities for solutions to the attention of the respective decision-makers."

If we analyse the two overriding objectives of the workshop encounter that are central to both approaches - creating an atmosphere in which perceptions can change, and communicating new information and insights into the policy process - we can say, at the risk of oversimplification, that Doob's conception places relatively more emphasis on creating the conditions for change, while Burton places relatively more emphasis on creating and establishing the conditions for transfer.

Given these somewhat distinct conceptions of the workshop exercise, how does each approach define the task of the workshop itself? What are the means by which the workshop brings about the desired changes, and what roles do the participants and the social scientists have to fulfil if these changes are to take place?

Both approaches are designed to create the conditions for effective and creative problem-solving. To this end, participants must learn to communicate with each other in different and new ways, to revise perceptions distorted by a history of conflict, and, in Burton's words, to view "the conflict as a problem to be solved and not as a contest to be won" (Burton, 1969:157). In relation to each other, they must change from the role of 'antagonist' engaged in a zero-sum game, to that of 'collaborator' searching for a positive-sum outcome to a common problem. The role of the third party is to enhance this process. However, the two approaches differ on how this process comes about.

In the Burtonian model, the primary mediating process is the 'behavioural' and 'systemic analysis' of conflict. The workshop setting is designed to involve the participants in this process of conflict analysis together with the panel of social scientists. In a percep-

tive contribution, Anthony de Reuck, a former member of the Centre for the Analysis of Conflict in London, has identified three roles that participants may play in a workshop situation : "combatant representative", "conflict analyst", and "cooperative representative". On this point, de Reuck comments as follows :-

"An essential part of the controlled communication technique is to divest the parties of their roles and inhibitions as combatant representatives, and to offer them alternative roles, first as conflict analysts and later as cooperative representatives. In their roles as combatant representatives, the parties' reference group is that physically present around the conference table. At first, no doubt, it comprises only the academic panel, but as the meeting proceeds, I believe it could be shown to expand to include also the opponent party" (de Reuck, 1970).

The role of 'conflict analyst', enhanced by the definition of the situation, gradually transforms into that of 'cooperative representative'. It also remains available as an alternative when the 'cooperative process' generates too much stress; participants can "retreat into the more intellectual role of general conflict analyst".

The role of 'conflict analyst' is readily available insofar as the workshop is presented - as was the case in the London workshop - as a research project. In a more general sense, the research context, can facilitate entry into the process of communication and broaden the content of what is communicated.

Thus, when research serves as the context of the workshop, it becomes possible to involve conflicting parties who previously refused to communicate, because to do so would have meant to take unacceptably high risks!" The research context permits communication with minimum commitment and risk. Similarly, the research context enables participants to express views and to discuss issues that

they would have to avoid if they were speaking in their official capacities. The combination of research with conflict resolution thus makes for an ambiguity that may greatly facilitate the process of communication" (Burton, 1969:43).

In short, the research context can overcome some of the barriers to communication that characterise the relationship of conflicting parties, provided that both the organisers of the workshop and the participants are genuinely interested in conflict research and not just using it as a means to bring the parties together. Thus the research context not only creates a readiness to engage in communication, but also provides for a 'crucial step' in conflict resolution itself. Kelman (1972:183) elaborates :

"Furthermore, insofar as both parties are working with the social scientist panel in a research effort, they can more readily come to regard each other as collaborators in a common enterprise".

Given Burton's conception of the workshop task, the essential role of the social scientist is "to inject into discussion new information, not about the dispute in question, but about conflict, its origins and processes drawn from theoretical analyses and empirical studies" (Burton, 1969:157). At a later stage in the workshop, when 'solutions' are under consideration, the social scientists also contribute information designed to extend the range of 'integrative mechanism' and possibilities for 'functional cooperation' that participants can consider. The panel of social scientists, and especially the discussion chairman, are constantly aware of the workings of the 'group process.' They try to enhance movement away from the role of "combatant representative" and toward the role of "conflict analyst" and increasingly toward that of "cooperative

representative". But in the Burtonian model, the key professional input of the social scientists is at the level of theory and relevant empirical findings.

In both the Fermeda and Stirling workshops, the primary mediating process was "sensitization" of participants to their 'interpersonal behaviour' and to 'group process.' Both of these workshops attempted training in the skills of communication through the use of the laboratory or experimental approach to learning. The trainers explain the process of individual learning by an ongoing analysis of group interaction by means of demonstration, exposition, and the use of special exercises, and they involve the participants in this process of learning. Thomas Wickes (1970:26), one of the trainers at the Fermeda workshop comments :

"...The basic feature of this approach is that participants learn through analysis of, and generalizations from, their own experience and that of others with whom they interact. Laboratory participants, in different words, must first participate (interact, behave); then they are encouraged to reflect upon the meaning and impact of that behaviour in relation to both themselves and others".

Adoption of the 'process analyst role' by the participants is facilitated by defining the workshop as essentially a 'learning experience - a training laboratory.' In this context, participants seem more willing to experiment with various psychological techniques such as simulation, brainstorming, and National Training exercises. Even so, it needs to be kept in mind that some participants in both the Fermeda and Stirling workshops resented procedures that had no clear and immediate relationship to the objective of the exercise.

Similarly, the context of a training laboratory - like the context of a research project in the Burtonian model - permits

communication with relatively little commitment and risk. In this insulated setting, the individual participants are encouraged to articulate ideas that would be unacceptable in other more formal contexts. However, in both Fermeda and Stirling, "it is noteworthy that when the smaller T-groups came together in the general assembly and participants were exposed to fellow nationals, with whom they had not shared the common T-group experience," they tended to revert to previously held 'nationalistic positions.' The learning context was in both cases 'overwhelmed' by the reality of the conflicts in question. However, in the opinion of Kelman (1972:185) "for as long as the learning context is maintained, the freedom to explore with a minimal sense of risk can greatly facilitate the process of creative problem-solving."

In line with the Fermeda and Stirling workshops' definition of their tasks, the primary roles of the social scientists are to encourage the development of sensitivity to 'group process' and 'effective communication' patterns among the participants. As the participants engage in efforts at problem-solving, the role of the social scientist is to enhance the process - to assist the group to identify problems when the process seems to break down and to develop strategies that would keep it going. In both the training and problem-solving phases (which need to be separated for analytical purposes), they assist the participants in observing and understanding their own interactions. As in Burton's exercises, the social scientists may introduce relevant theoretical and empirical material, but "their primary inputs in the Doobian model consist of observations and interpretations of the ongoing group process" (Kelman, 1972:186).

6.12 Conclusion

The differences between the approaches of Burton and that of Doób are mostly differences in emphasis. Despite their different origins, both approaches rest upon a set of surprisingly similar assumptions and insights about the use of "clinical" procedures to enhance 'creative problem-solving' among conflicting parties, and about the potential contributions of these procedures to conflict resolution at the political level. Both approaches are concerned with producing 'altered perceptions', and with the feedback of such changed perceptions to national decision-makers. To enhance and facilitate such change, both rely on insights from conflict theory and from small group dynamics. They differ essentially in their application of scientific techniques to enhance both conflict analysis and resolution and on the question of the locus of the workshop in relation to decision-makers.

In the following chapter the focus shifts to certain guidelines which may facilitate the development of a more empirically-based theory of conflict resolution. Some possible areas for further investigation and research will be tentatively explored.

Endnotes to Chapter 6

1. Of the many articles and contributions by Herbert C. Kelman, the following are especially useful :
Kelman, Herbert C. and Cohen, Stephen P. "The Problem-Solving Workshop: A Social-Psychological Contribution to the Resolution of International Conflicts", (1976) Journal of Peace Research, vol. XIII, no. 2, p.79-90; and "The problem-solving workshop in conflict resolution" (1972), pp.168-204 in Richard L. Merritt (ed.). Communication in International Politics, Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
2. The proceedings of the Fermeda Workshop have been published in Doob, Leonard W. (ed.). Resolving Conflict in Africa - The Fermeda Workshop, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970. The Fermeda workshop took place from 2 August to 14 August 1969 in a ski resort (Hotel Fermeda) in the mountains of Northern Italy.
3. For an outline and critique of the Stirling Workshop, see: Doob, Leonard W. & Foltz, William J. "The Belfast Workshop - An Application of Group Techniques to a Destructive Conflict," (1973) Journal of Conflict Resolution, vol. 18, no. 2, pp.276-284; Doob, Leonard W. and Foltz, William J. "The Impact of a Workshop upon Grass-Roots Leaders in Belfast" (1974) Journal of Conflict Resolution, vol. 18, no. 2, pp.237-256, and Boehringer, G.H., V. Zeroulis, J. Bayley and K. Boehringer (1974) "Stirling : The Destructive Application of Group Techniques to a Conflict", Journal of Conflict Resolution, vol. 18, no. 2, pp.257-276.
4. Interview with Leonard Doob, in the Holiday Inn, Pretoria, 17 September 1985. Conducted by the author in the presence of Mrs Doob.
5. Prof. Doob has, however, revised his views on the usefulness of brainstorming and sensitivity training as techniques for conflict resolution. He now considers these potentially destructive to the parties, in the sense of generating too much "emotive energy and frustration". Vide, Interview conducted with Prof. Doob, Pretoria, 17 September 1985.
6. Some of the relevant sources include: Lewis, I.M. The Modern History of Somaliland, Praeger, New York, 1965; Mariam, M.W. The Background of the Ethio-Somalia Boundary Dispute, Berhanena Selam, Addis Ababa, 1964, and Touval, Saadia, Somali Nationalism, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1963.
7. Touval, Saadia, Somali Nationalism, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MASS., 1963, p.12.
Approximately 90 per cent of the Somali population belongs to the Galla ethnic grouping. Eight per cent is Arabian. The remaining two per cent is made up of Europeans, Indians and Pakistanis.

8. The Soviet Union has since reversed its military support for Somalia in 1977, and redirected it to the military government of neighbouring Ethiopia.
9. For details of these workshops, see Doob, Leonard (ed.). Resolving Conflict in Africa - The Fermeda Workshop, Yale University Press, New Haven, Appendix 2, pp.183-192.
10. The basic configuration or unit for this kind of learning is the training group, or T-group. Participants are assigned to T-groups, normally made up of heterogeneous groupings, and meet regularly therein throughout the extent of the workshop. The T-group is the core learning unit.
11. A modified form of sensitivity training was used in Fermeda. The purpose of combining simulation exercises with sensitivity training was to facilitate the process of learning and to enhance the 'group process.' These techniques assisted the participants to learn how to identify with each other, how to find and explore their essential humanity, their similarities, and their superordinate goals as human beings."
12. These smaller diagnostic groups, composed of representatives from the three national groups, engaged in conflict analysis. In the case of the Fermeda workshop, various problems were encountered when these smaller diagnostic groups reported back to the general assembly. In the general assembly, many participants reverted back to their previously held nationalistic positions.
13. The results of this research are published in Doob, Leonard W. "The Impact of the Fermeda Workshop on the Conflicts in the Horn of Africa", International Journal of Group Tensions, vol. 1, no. 1, 1971, pp.91-101.
14. Interview with Leonard Doob, in the Holiday Inn, Pretoria, 17 September 1985.
15. Interview with Leonard Doob, in the Holiday Inn, Pretoria, 17 September 1985.
16. The American social scientists included, Daniel I. Alevy, B.B. Bunker, Leonard W. Doob, William Foltz, N. French, E.B. Klein and J.C. Miller.
17. The primary tasks of the social scientists were to encourage the development of sensitivity to 'group process' and effective communication patterns among the participants. The planning group consisted of Leonard Doob together with Edward B. Klein and James C. Miller, both clinical psychologists.
18. This point is well argued by Boehringer, G.H., V. Zeruolis, J. Bayley and K. Boehringer. "Stirling: The Destructive Application of Group Techniques to a Conflict", Journal of Conflict Resolution, vol. 18, no. 2, June 1974, pp.257-276.

19. The relevant sources are: Bennis, W.G. and H.A. Shepard (1956). "A Theory of Group Development", Human Relations, no. 4, pp.415-437; Harrow, M., B.M. Astrachan, G.J.Tucker, E.B. Klein, and J.C. Miller (1971). "The T-group and study group laboratory experience", Journal of Social Psychology, 85, pp.225-237; Klein, E.B., and B.M. Astrachan (1971). "Learning in groups: a comparison of study groups and T-groups", Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 7, pp.659-693, and Klein, E.B., C.S. Thomas, and E. Bellis (1971) "When warring groups meet: the use of a group approach in police-Black community relations", Social Psychiatry, 6, pp.93-99.
20. Interview conducted by the author with Leonard Doob in the Holiday Inn, Pretoria, 17 September 1985.

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CHAPTER 7

FROM PROBLEM-SOLVING WORKSHOPS TO EMPIRICAL THEORY - SOME POSSIBLE GUIDELINES

7.1 Introduction

The concern of this chapter is to explore certain guidelines which may facilitate the development of a more empirically-based theory of conflict resolution. Some possible avenues for further investigation and research will be suggested, notably with reference to the role and limitations associated with third party intervention; the structure of the discussion format; the time sequence; and the composition of the warring parties. Insights culled from appropriate case studies and from the realities of conflict relationships, especially in present-day South Africa, will be used to illustrate points and to substantiate arguments.

7.2 Stating the problem

While an extensive body of knowledge exists on the sources of conflict, on various typologies of conflict and on the history of conflict research, "the practice of third party intervention and the problems associated with it, has only very recently been studied systematically" (Bercovitch, 1984:2). In most cases, "scholars hardly looked beyond detailed descriptions of single cases intervention". Thus, studies aimed at a deeper and comprehensive understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of problem-solving workshops and of third party intervention in such workshops, are hard to find. With the exception of the work by Mitchell (1981), Bercovitch (1984), Nierenberg (1973) and Zartman (1978), most of the many other studies do not make use of a comparative perspective

in analysing conflict intervention, but focus instead on detailed analyses of specific conflicts.

More comprehensive approaches to conflict such as those of Burton (1969); Curle (1971); Deutsch (1973); Gurr (1971); Haas (1974) and Wright (1964), to name but a few, are not predominantly concerned with the practice of conflict intervention. Thus, these and other sources, are not particularly helpful in providing possible guidelines for a more empirically-based theory of conflict intervention.

However, before specific issues and problems are examined and some exploratory guidelines for their resolution are offered, two important theoretical issues need to be introduced, namely, first, the perennial question whether conflicts are primarily subjective (i.e. perceptual) or objective in nature. This question is theoretically relevant, because it has implications for the process and practice of conflict intervention.

The view that conflicts are primarily subjective (i.e. perceptual) is tenable when we accept that "disputed values are not absolute or in fixed supply." To put it differently, that such values may be changed, redefined, or altered in the process of conflict intervention. Bercovitch (1984:5), comments as follows :

"...If conflicting parties could somehow be brought, through a third party perhaps, to a greater awareness of their perceptions and predispositions, then opposed values may well change to collaborative values".

Thus, subjective approaches to conflict (such as those discussed in this study) are primarily concerned with the subjective orientations of the warring parties and with devising strategies and creating conditions for rectifying conflict-producing

"misperceptions". Given this approach, a situation may be seen as a conflict situation if, and only if, all the parties concerned perceive that they are in conflict. Therefore, from a concern with underlying structural conditions, the analyst moves to a concern with the parties' awareness and perceptual definition of a situation.

Opposed to this subjective approach is the view that asserts that conflicts exist wherever there are incompatible interests and values, irrespective of whether or not the actors are aware of these interests and values. Where subjective approaches to conflict stress motivational, psychological and attitudinal factors, objective approaches emphasize structural and interest factors.

With a different understanding of conflict, it follows that each approach offers its own mode of conflict resolution. "The former approach sees conflict termination as entailing a change in perceptions, the latter argues for a restructuring of social conditions" (Schmid, 1968).

The second theoretical issue that needs to be examined is primarily of a conceptual nature and relates to the distinction between 'conflict management' and 'conflict resolution'. The former concept is primarily concerned with regulating the expansion and escalation of conflict with a view towards creating the conditions conducive to resolution. Conflict resolution, however, implies "removing the sources of a conflict relationship" (Burton, 1969:233-235). Whether this is achieved by changing perceptions or altering behaviour is immaterial. What seems to be more important is that both conflict management and resolution, and indeed third party intervention, may be 'attitude-oriented', or 'behaviour-oriented',

or both; "each type of intervention will, presumably, call for different strategies of intervention, and different third party roles" (Bercovitch, 1984:9).

Another distinction between two basic types of conflict intervention is that between endogenous and exogenous intervention. The former refers to intervention undertaken by the parties to a conflict themselves, and implies direct communication and negotiations. The latter refers to efforts undertaken by an outside intermediary. On Bercovitch's analysis (1984:11), exogenous intervention can be further subdivided into (a) "binding", and (b) "voluntary" modes of intervention. Binding intervention refers to processes remarkably similar to arbitration and adjudication. The voluntary mode describes a process of intervention where the third party facilitates the interchange between warring parties and plays an "analytical", "supportive" but "non-evaluative" role, to paraphrase Mitchell (1981). It is the latter form of third party intervention which is the concern of this study.

To recap: the earlier theoretical distinction - a conflict is "managed" or "settled" when destructive behaviour has been reduced and hostile attitudes have been lessened. In contrast, a conflict is said to be resolved when "the basic structure of the situation giving rise to destructive behaviour and hostile attitudes have been altered or re-perceived by the participants in conflict" (Mitchell, 1981:15).

Conflict intervention, such as third party intermediation, can, therefore, be directed at conflict settlement (management), or it can be directed at achieving the more complex, outcome of conflict resolution. Bercovitch (1984:11), presents these two basic modes of "conflict management" as follows :-

TYPES OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

1

Conflict management
at the level of
behaviour



MANIFEST LEVEL

2

Conflict management
at the level of atti-
tudes and perceptions



LATENT LEVEL

ENDOGE-
NOUS

Bargaining, negotiation

Creative problem-solving

Conflict settlementConflict resolution

EXOGE-
NOUS

Mediation, arbitration

Third-party intermedia-
tion and creative
problem-solvingConflict settlementConflict resolution

There is general agreement in the literature that for both of the above two modes of conflict management to work effectively, or even to intervene in a conflict in order to influence its outcome, the intermediary must have some understanding of the causes of the conflict in question. For different conceptions of the causes of conflict will dictate (at least to some extent) different approaches to conflict settlement and resolution.

While the causes of conflict need not concern us here, it is worth emphasizing the point that these may generate patterns of interaction that may favour some modes of intervention as opposed to others. For example, if the causes of a conflict are perceived to be primarily embedded in incompatible interests and values, as opposed to hostile attitudes and feelings, or misperceptions, this may require a different approach to conflict settlement and resolution.

Following Bercovitch (1984), 'manifest conflict' may require bargaining and negotiation to be settled. In contrast, conflict at a more latent level may be resolved through the intervention of a third-party or the application of 'creative problem-solving'.

7.3 The basis of third party intervention

Before addressing some of the theoretical and empirical concerns relating to third party intervention, it seems in order to clarify what is meant by the term "third party"? Basically, a third party is, as the term implies, "someone who is external to a certain conflict and who interposes between the conflicting parties in order to assist them in the process of conflict analysis and resolution " (Mitchell, 1981:57).

Third party intervention normally occurs under certain conditions such as the following : (a) In the event of a protracted and complex conflict; (b) in a situation where the parties are deadlocked; (c) perpetuation of conflict is seen by both sides as costly and potentially increasingly negative in its implications; and (d) there exists some level of communication or limited potential for cooperation between the parties (Mitchell, 1981).

Third party intervention is not a neutral process and can have some important structural and ethical implications for both conflict settlement and resolution. It may even create distinct possibilities for the exacerbation of conflict, as was indeed the case in the Stirling workshop of August 1972 conducted by Leonard Doob and his associates. It may result in "coalition formation" between the conflicting parties at the exclusion of a third party. This outcome is well documented in industrial and labour disputes. (See among the many sources, Cartwright & Zander, 1976; Hare, 1976; Robbins, 1974, and Blake & Mouton, 1964.) Finally, it may act as a catalyst in changing the destructive relationship between parties to a more cooperative one. In all of these cases the effect of third party intervention is to some extent to modify the nature of interactions between the parties in conflict.

Harbottle (1979/80:120) offers a useful description of the process of third party intervention, when he writes :

"...the intervention into a dispute of a person or agency whose purpose is to act as an instrument for bringing about a peaceful settlement to that dispute, while creating structures whereby the foundations of a lasting settlement may be laid".

Young (1967:34) in his classical study on third party intermediation, defines it as :

"...any action taken by an actor that is not a direct party to the crisis, that is designed to reduce or remove one or more problems in the bargaining relationship and, therefore, to facilitate the termination of the conflict itself".

The basis of third party intervention is voluntary. This type of intervention, moreover, is of an ad hoc nature and its influence is supposed to be beneficial to both parties. The overriding purpose of third party intervention is to modify the basic structure of conflict so as to make it more amenable to resolution.

"A third party is not neutral or ultimately entirely 'objective' - it brings with it certain ideas, knowledge, assumptions, values and interests - all of which do influence the prospects and process of achieving termination!" (Mitchell, 1981: 65).

When analysed closely and systematically, the relationship between a third party and the conflicting parties may be seen as having the following features :-

- (1) Third party intervention is a voluntary relationship;
- (2) It is designed to influence and regulate the interactions amongst conflicting parties;
- (3) "It is a relationship between an outsider offering help and a conflict system requiring help" (Bercovitch, 1984:14);
- (4) While third parties can offer a wide range of useful suggestions, they have, though no authority to impose a particular solution or outcome; and
- (5) The relationship is seen by all concerned as a temporary one.

The reasons for the involvement of third parties in conflict are many and varied. These range from being invited by one or both parties, or requested to intervene by other interested parties (such as the United Nations or regional organisations). A third party may also intervene on its own accord when it perceives that its basic interests may be adversely affected. Intervention may also be guided by a desire to preserve established relationships (such as trade and economic relations), especially if such relationships are perceived to be under threat. Finally, third party intervention may be seen as relatively inexpensive as opposed to other modes of intervention such as military intervention or economic punitive measures.

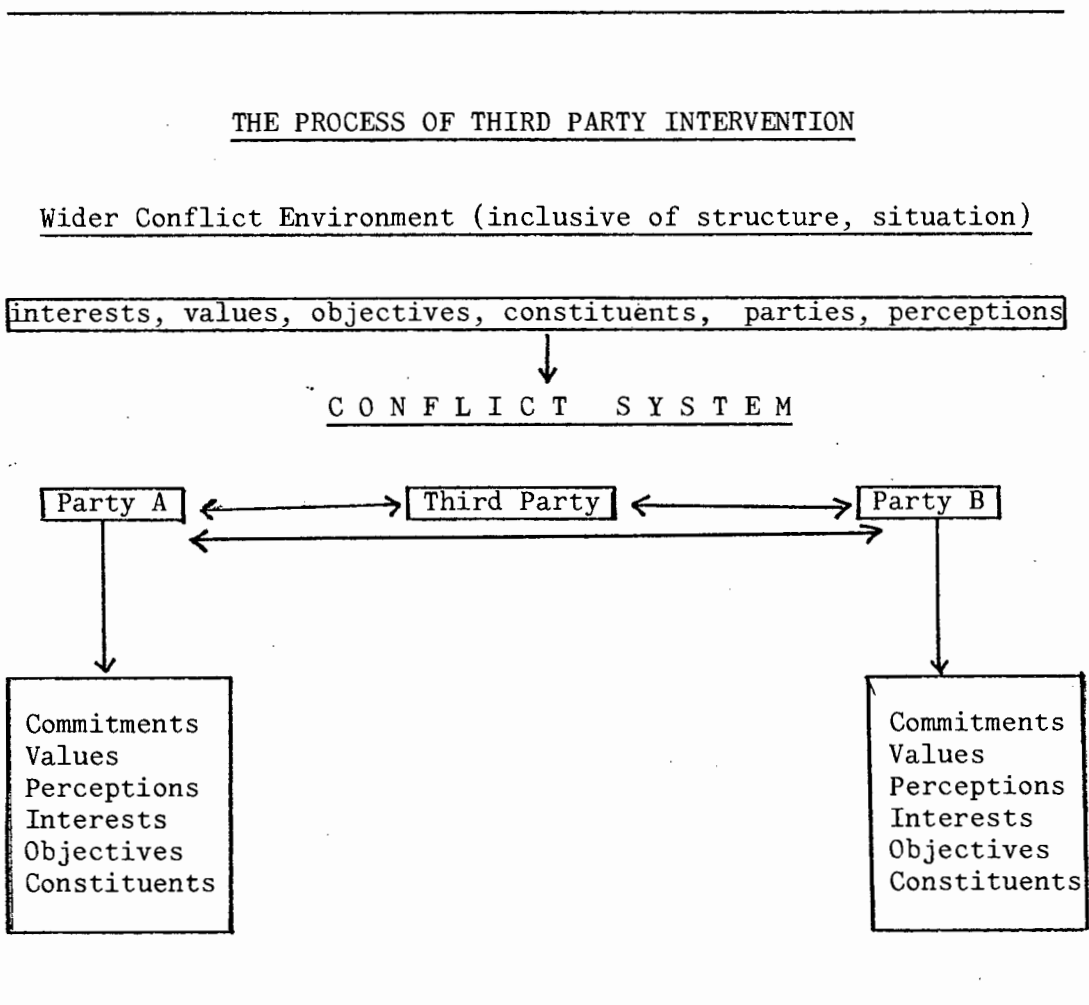
Despite a vast, and growing body of literature on third party intervention, such as the study by Walton (1969), with reference to interpersonal conflict and the research of Douglas (1962) which deals extensively with the role of third parties in industrial conflict, third party intervention has - perhaps somewhat surprisingly - been discussed in isolation of other disciplines. This observation holds despite the fine studies of Young (1967), Garrow (1978), Ott (1972), and Rubin (1981).

The major omission of most of the studies listed above, "is to view third party intervention as a separate, autonomous process, rather than considering it as an integral part of a more comprehensive process of conflict settlement and resolution" (Bercovitch, 1984:15). A small number of studies share Bercovitch's concern, notably that by Carl Stevens (1963) and Schelling (1960). In this respect, Stevens (1963:123) comments :

"An analysis of mediation is not possible except in the context of a general analysis of bargaining negotiations". (Own emphasis.)

The various workshop approaches analysed in this study, share this limitation. They are simply not comprehensive enough in their analysis of third party intermediation, and are in most cases, not integrated with a more comprehensive process of negotiation and bargaining.

Following Bercovitch (1984:15), the actual process of third party intervention may be presented as follows :



The above diagram represents a problem-solving approach to third party intervention, where the latter acts as a facilitator between two warring parties. The diagram emphasises the need for a comprehensive approach, which includes an understanding of the wider conflict environment and its constituent elements such as the respective interests, values, objectives and perceptions of the warring parties.

Most of the more traditional approaches to conflict resolution are characterised by a combination of the following features :

- (1) "Disagreement over means (for example, 'my way of resolving conflict versus your way').
- (2) A clear 'us-them' distinction between the warring parties.
- (3) Each party views the conflict from its point of view and interests only.
- (4) Conflicts are often intensely personalised.
- (5) Invariably, disagreements rather than potential agreements are stressed.
- (6) Normally negative stereotypes become all pervasive"(Blake & Mouton, 1961: 18-33).

In contrast to these orientations, the problem-solving approach to conflict settlement and resolution purports to alter the "win-lose" orientation to one where both parties can accomplish positive gains and address the underlying causes of their particular conflict. It is an approach which aims to resolve a conflict not merely to settle it. Roger Fisher of Harvard University's phrase of a "win-win proposition" encapsulates the basic idea.

To be effective, the practice of third party intervention must be directed to the attitudinal and situational components of a conflict relationship, not merely at its behavioural manifestations. Thus, it is an approach which must involve the following processes and be informed by the following assumptions :

- (a) The primary focus of all the participants (including the third party) must be on ways of how to resolve the conflict, rather than on 'defeating the other side.'
- (b) Basically, the parties should avoid voting on issues, and should steer clear from adjudication or a search for compromise merely for the sake of compromise.
- (c) The phenomenon of conflict must be accepted as natural, even beneficial. (This assumption rests upon the adjunct of the 'functionality' of conflict under certain conditions).
- (d) All parties should display an attitude away from 'fixed solutions' to goals, interests and motives.
- (e) A collective responsibility for the quality and acceptance of the outcome must be established and respected by all concerned.
- (f) The actions of the third party should be of a non-evaluative nature (meaning that the third party should not pass judgement on any of the participants), while the legitimacy of the third party and that of the parties themselves should be unchallenged.

The above exposition implies that third party intervention of this kind is designed to resolve (as distinct from settling a conflict). In practical terms, third party intervention can do so by a combination of some or all of the following techniques :

- (a) Helping the conflicting parties discover the issues /interests that are in conflict. A third party's intervention starts with an attempt to discover the real issues /interests that are in conflict. For, as Burton (1969) has shown, these are often concealed or inadequately articulated by the parties themselves.

In practical terms, "a third party can help to discover the real issues/interests in conflict (with the assistance of the parties themselves), by listening; by asking relevant questions; by extracting responses; by asking for and gathering additional information, and more generally assisting each side to go beyond formal positions and demands" (Bercovitch, 1984:67).

- (b) Identifying the conflict relationship: Once the issues/interests in conflict and the objectives of each party become clear, then the third party should assist the parties to relate to each other. This can be done by playing 'an analytical role' by, for example, pointing out the increasing costs of a conflict, or by emphasising the advantages of resolution over continued conflict.

"Moreover, a third party should attempt to learn about past relationships, conflicts, expectations, and any other relevant aspects of their earlier relationship. In some cases there may be a long-established pattern of cooperation, in others a long history of conflict and acrimonious interaction!" Knowledge of the actual conflict relationship,

both past and present, between the conflicting parties is an important factor determining the role and possibilities of third party intervention.

- (c) Third parties should respect and maintain the privacy of their interactions with the warring parties. In a practical sense, a third party can, and should, assure that public statements are kept to a minimum, and that both sides can enjoy the freedom that confidentiality brings. "The practice of third party intervention suggests that privacy takes away some of the structural pressures associated with conflict settlement and resolution" (Blake & Mouton, 1964:12).

- (d) The third party should also identify "representative-constituent relationships" (Bercovitch, 1984:67).

The actual parties and their representatives have different relationships to their respective constituents. Some may be highly influenced or constrained by their constituents. Others may have more room for manoeuvre. Clearly, some representatives have more power over their constituents, while some may be in a 'symbolic relationship' to their constituents.

The third party should inform himself of the precise relationship between the representative and his/her constituency, "by identifying the lines of responsibility and communication between negotiators and constituents."

- (e) A third party should assist in discovering the causes of a conflict relationship. This observation is vitally

important, for a third party's behaviour is often determined by the causes specific to a particular conflict. These causes may be related to a variety of issues such as the following :

- (i) unrealistic expectations;
- (ii) negative interpersonal relationships;
- (iii) irreconcilable interests; and
- (iv) mutual hostile perceptions.

In this context, the distinction between conflicts of 'values' and conflicts of 'interests' is an important one which constantly needs to be kept in mind by the third party.

(f) All of the above roles of a third party can be accomplished by the application of specific techniques of intervention, such as the following :

- (i) "patient listening, controlling hostility, and deliberately strengthening expectations that an agreement will be reached;
- (ii) deliberately encouraging both parties to air their differences;
- (iii) separating or bringing the parties together, as the need arises;
- (iv) getting the parties to see and experience their conflict as a shared dilemma; and
- (v) separating the 'people from the problem'"(Fischer, & Ury, 1981).

This means that the third party must assist the parties in

"changing their perceptions, redefining their goals and critically reassessing their values!" Thus, third party intervention should go beyond a marginal change in the attitudes, perceptions and values of the parties; it should attempt a fundamental change in each party's concerns, and promote a "collaborative conflict resolution process" (Burton, 1969; 1972(b); de Reuck, 1974; Mitchell, 1981; Hill, 1982).

On Burton's analysis (1972(b):46), conflict resolution as a result of third party intervention, demands that the parties should abandon 'power-oriented strategies' which treat symptoms only, and embrace "a participatory, analytical, and non-coercive approach which provides for the release of pent-up feelings and brings to surface underlying values, motives, and perceptions".

However, being such a complex and demanding process, the problem-solving approach demands special qualities from third parties.

Following Mitchell (1981:xvi), the most important attributes and qualities for successful third party intervention include, among others, the following :

- (i) "A basic sense of fairness, independence, and impartiality.
- (ii) A basic diagnostic ability."

All these attributes and qualities are being achieved by being "facilitative, non-coercive, diagnostic, non-directive, and non-evaluative".

In addition to these attributes and qualities, Fisher

(1972:67-94), emphasises a capacity to "regulate interaction between the parties", and to "improve communication between the parties in conflict".

Having concerned ourselves with the basis and attributes for successful third party intervention, the actual process of third party intervention needs to be more fully discussed and analysed. In this respect, some mention will be made of the South African context and the prospects and problems associated with third party intervention there.

7.4 The process of third party intervention

While many traditional approaches to third party intervention have operated on a number of normative assumptions, such as that a third party constitutes something of a "miracle worker", "capable of resolving any kind of conflict", or that a third party is generally unwelcome or an "unwanted intruder" (Bercovitch, 1984:120), this chapter will address two issues of central importance to third party intervention, namely : (a) the process and modes of actual third party intervention, and (b) situational factors which affect the relationship between a third party and the conflicting parties.

(a) Process and modes of third party intervention

The process and particular mode of third party intervention depend, to a considerable extent, on the character, context and participants in a conflict situation. Broadly speaking, a useful distinction between two basic modes of intervention may be drawn, namely :

- (i) 'Process interventions', and

- (ii) 'Instrumental interventions' (Bartunek et al., 1975; Lipshitz & Sherwood, 1978).

Process interventions are comprehensive in nature, aiming to be inclusive of all the major political and social formations in society. Their scope and impact are extensive. They are meant to affect the entire system of interactions and produce an acceptable termination of the conflict. Instrumental interventions, on the other hand, are more limited in scope. They are characterized by the absence of major parties and groupings to the conflict, and have limited impact on the general outcome and dynamic of a conflict relationship.

For the purposes of this discussion, the mode and procedures associated with process intervention will be analysed. While it is true that "process intervention may be more or less active, complex, open or difficult to institutionalize," this mode of intervention shares some common features. Bercovitch (1984:121), comments as follows :-

"...Process intervention focuses on the social, attitudinal, and interpersonal dimensions of a conflict relationship".

Process intervention attempts to improve communication amongst the parties by directing attention toward the nature and meaning of a relationship and instil a realistic assessment of the costs associated with continued conflict. As such, process intervention combines a variety of approaches and techniques to deal with some real problems associated with conflict. These include the problems of emotion, hostile perceptions and communication. Each of these problems

will now be briefly discussed within the context of process intervention.

Emotions

By their very nature, conflict relationships generate considerable emotional energy. Many of the emotions generated, notably anger, frustration, fear and aversion do in fact complicate the process of third party intervention and of resolution.

In process intervention a third party acts in a "supportive, facilitative, analytical, non-condemnatory and non-directive manner" (Mitchell, 1981:77) in attempting to address these emotional problems. In addition, the third party generates new information (negative emotions can be related to limited or unreliable information), and should encourage parties to express their feelings and emotions. To allow such an exchange to materialise, it demands from the third party considerable diagnostic skills, a basic ability to understand and reassure each party, and a capacity to create flexible structures for interaction. On Burton's (1967:20-36) analysis, it involves assisting each party to define the situation as it perceives it, 'clarifying positions' and 'generating options for mutual cooperation'.

However, as Bercovitch (1984:121-122) points out, this strategy of intervention may work well "at some levels of analysis; it does not seem particularly helpful to participants in, for instance, protracted international conflicts". Conflicts such as those in the Middle East, South Africa or in parts of Latin America are "high-

intensity" conflicts between diverse socio-political and cultural formations,"some of whom perceive a threat to their existence or vital interests; many of whom interact in a highly-charged environment where cohesion, trust, openness, and mutual support are low". A third party, intervening in such a conflict, where there is a clear 'us versus them' distinction faces a formidable task. In such a context, where conflicting parties are often prevented from developing 'consensual' or 'integrative solutions,' the third party intermediary has to play a more limited role. Most scholars agree that the "emotional hang-ups" will have to be worked through to some extent by the parties themselves, before process intervention can take place. (See, for example, Schein, 1969, and French et al., 1978.) The underlying role of a third party in such a context is to "assist" the parties by getting them to explore, express and (hopefully) modify their negative and hostile emotions so as to alter their attitudes and behaviour.

In this context, the 'case-work method', suggested as early as 1949 by Hollis (1949:294-9), may offer some useful applications. Hollis argues the case for what he terms, 'psychological support', which involves providing the parties with a "sympathetic hearing, understanding of their feelings and emotions, and confidence in their ability to overcome their mutual problem". Moreover, the third party must engage in 'clarification', where the parties are encouraged in the exploration and understanding of their environment and its problems and in 'insight', which

involves "pushing the client towards a deeper understanding of his own actions and emotions".

Perceptions

The other aspect that is significant to process intervention concerns the problem of perception. Parties in conflict have different - and often mutually exclusive - perceptions of their situation. It is important to remember that the perceptions of parties reflect not only an objective situation of incompatibility, but also each other's self-image and prejudices. To the extent that perceptions are inaccurate, or even faulty, conflict can escalate and become more destructive. In principle, no party is immune to this process. Thus a third party in process intervention is also expressly concerned with this psychological dimension of conflict. On this point Bercovitch (1984:122), comments as follows :

"...Its efforts are designed to discover the hidden needs and unravel the unconscious dispositions of the parties. Its general strategy is to deal with values and concepts which can aid misperception and adjust individual perception by reality testing".

The various techniques which a third party can utilise to realise these objectives include, among others, assisting the parties to be as explicit and honest about their perceptions (for example, asking them to write them down in some order) and testing the relevance of partisan and common perceptions. Other techniques which have been utilised suggest that encouraging the free expression of feelings, perceptions as well as issues, without one party blaming the other, and analysing each party's perceptions openly, can enhance the prospect of arriving at a mutually acceptable outcome.

The real significant point, however, is that a third party in process intervention should ensure that parties do not perceive only two mutually exclusive solutions or outcomes to a conflict, namely, 'winning' or 'losing'. Perceptions of 'total victory' such as those that inform the views of the present South African Government and the African National Congress (ANC) militate against negotiations. Therefore a third party should ask questions and elicit information in order to increase awareness of a common predicament.

One of the most important dimensions in successful third party intervention is the ability to understand the perceptions, expectations and choices of the respective warring parties. In a more general sense, a third party can assist in reducing mutually exclusive perceptions by insisting on "summarizing issues, restating positions, and disseminating relevant information". All these techniques may result in parties perceiving their relationship not as 'us versus them', but as 'us versus the conflict'.

On Bercovitch's analysis (1984:123), the possibilities of such a perceptual shift "are contingent upon openness, understanding, free and unrestricted information, trust, and interpersonal competence". Adding that third party intervention of the process mode can, however, only achieve this if, "(a) the number of parties permits participation by everyone involved, and (b) those involved exchange their own perceptions, rather than those of their referent groups". Process intervention is effective only

when a third party has direct access to the conflicting parties.

Communication

Open and reliable communication between conflicting parties is wisely seen as a prerequisite to cooperation and successful conflict resolution. A third party involved in process intervention is more than 'go-between' parties. A third party provides not only the 'context' and 'opportunity' to communicate," but also the opportunity to review the content of communication and to ensure that each is able to understand the other side'.

The relevant techniques that a third party can employ to assist in this vital problem," range from summing up positions, clarifying points of departure, restating key arguments (if and when necessary), and providing information inputs." Following the precepts of the Burtonian model to conflict resolution, resolution itself is a product of 'direct, reliable and undistorted communication'.

Burton (1967:14) himself operates on the assumption that an increase in communication alone may enhance the tendency of parties to cooperate and to subject their conflict to attempts to resolve it. Bercovitch (1984:123-124), however, adds the caveat that this may be true of process intervention only; it does not hold for instrumental intervention. Moreover, in some situations such as those characterised by intense conflict of interests, increasing communication, or the opportunities to communicate may actually result in heightened conflict.

In process intervention, third parties can influence the way information is being collected and presented so that it is optimally useful to the phases of diagnosis, analysis and resolution. However, it needs to be stressed that process intervention, with its emphasis on 'openness' and 'communication', does not in itself produce a decrease in intergroup or international conflict.

Process intervention is designed with a view to improving intra and inter-personal skills and competence. Like the problem-solving workshops previously discussed, its most significant impact occurs in terms of changes in individual perception and behaviour. Thus, a third party can assist in achieving by engaging in the following activities :

(i) Diagnosis

Essentially third party intervention in this phase includes the gathering of relevant information, discussing assumptions and perceptions, defining the problem and assisting with the development of a framework for communication and interaction.

(ii) Analysis

Third party activities in this phase include assisting the parties with ways of thinking about conflicts, involving the parties in exploring issues and alternatives, and improving their understanding.

(iii) Conflict resolution

During this phase the third party assists the parties

to find a solution based on 'mutual benefit' and 'joint action'.

Process intervention as discussed here has, as its overriding objective, the improvement of the parties' use of their capabilities and resources to achieve 'creative problem-solving.' Based on Mitchell's analysis (1981:77), third party interventions are based on the assumption that in a conflict relationship, a third party "(a) generates information, (b) provides analytical resources, and (c) acts in a supportive manner by assisting the parties to come to terms with their conflict." Ideally, a third party should exclude its own values and interests from the conflict relationship. However, any third party intervention in the type of social conflict that concerns this study involves a triadic system of two parties in conflict and an intermediary third party. This implies that the process of third party intervention is not as neutral as is often assumed.

7.5 Variables affecting process intervention

In each conflict relationship there are specific variables and conditions that affect the dynamic of a conflict and the potential role and limitations of third party intervention. On Buckingham's analysis (1982), the variables that seem to matter most are :

(a) the nature of the issues in dispute, (b) the nature of the parties, (c) the nature of their relationship, and (d) their experience with conflict settlement and resolution.

As a more general observation, it needs to be emphasized that, trying to isolate the variables conducive to joint problem-

solving, is by no means a simple matter. For each conflict has its own peculiar set of circumstances and dynamic that may either favour third party resolution or be opposed to it. A review of successful cases of third party intervention of the process variety, seem to suggest the following as some important variables or conditions in undertaking this kind of intervention.

(i) Situational variables

Process intervention is affected by such situational variables as a 'supportive or participative climate' (which enhances creativity) versus 'an authoritarian climate' (which discourages it). It is influenced by "spatial arrangements and degree of informality". Other situational variables that are important include : "the absence of time pressure and the availability of and access to reliable information. Finally, process interventions are more likely to succeed when conflict parties are roughly equal in size, have much the same experience and when they can be creative, free and open" (Bercovitch, 1984:125).

(ii) Rationality

Rational and effective problem-solving is dependent upon a "clear formulation of the issues in conflict." It is further dependent on information having the same meaning for both parties. Bercovitch (1984:125-126), comments succinctly :

"...The success of process intervention will depend on the parties' willingness and ability to expend high levels of energy to define the problem clearly, gather facts, identify alternatives, give information without accusations or judgements, and generally interact in a more rational way".

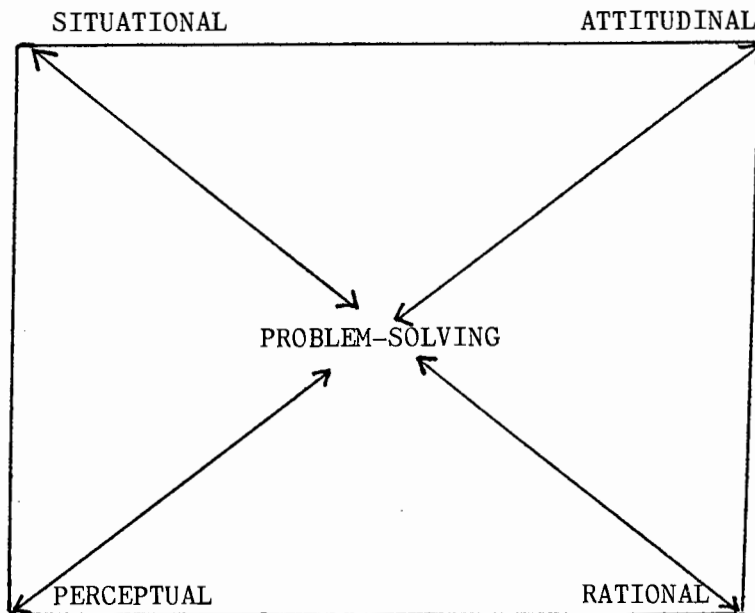
(iii) Attitudinal variables

The prospect for successful process intervention improves considerably when warring parties accept basic 'interdependence' and display some positive feelings and emotions towards each other. Thus, it is very important that the feelings and attitudes of the parties be identified, analysed and (if need be) changed, "for feelings of anger or fear may enter the process and influence attempts at conflict resolution detrimentally."

(iv) Perceptual variables

Conflict resolution or termination is often unsuccessful because it is undermined by the view that in each conflict there must be a 'winner' and a 'loser' and each party is determined not to be the 'loser'. This perceptual pattern of 'us versus them' is largely the product of socialization. Such a pattern of necessity exerts pressures towards zero-sum outcomes and competitive relationships. If process intervention is to be successful, it would require a situation wherein the biased perceptions of the parties can be changed. This seems more likely to be the case at the personal rather than at other levels of analysis.

Bercovitch (1984:126) illustrates these four sets of variables that influence both the possibilities and limitations of process intervention.

CONDITIONS AND VARIABLES AFFECTING PROCESS INTERVENTION

"Finally, it needs to be emphasized that the decision to resort to process intervention cannot be made in the abstract. Whether systematically or intuitively, cognizance has to be taken of situational, attitudinal, perceptual and rational variables, as all of these have an effect on the process of third party intervention" (Bercovitch, 1984: passim).

7.6 The Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group - an unsuccessful attempt at third party intermediation

Against this theoretical background, the unsuccessful attempt of the Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group in May 1986, to act as a third party intermediary with a view towards assisting the process of dialogue and negotiations between the ruling National Party and the majority Black population of South Africa, will be critically assessed.

The Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group (EPG) was appointed under the Commonwealth Accord on Southern Africa, accepted by Heads of Government in Nassau in the Bahamas in October 1985 as a "united Commonwealth response to the challenge of apartheid" (Mission to South Africa, 1986:19)."The Accord in its entirety provided the political and diplomatic framework for their intermediation; it contained both a specific injunction to the Group and called upon the South African Government to undertake five particular steps so as to create the conditions conducive to meaningful negotiations!" These five steps entailed the following :

- "(a) A public declaration by the South African Government that the system of apartheid would be dismantled, followed by specific and meaningful action taken in fulfilment of that end;
- (b) The termination of the national state of emergency;
- (c) The immediate and unconditional release of Nelson Mandela and all others imprisoned or detained for their opposition to apartheid;
- (d) The restoration of political freedom, which would include the unbanning of the African National Congress (ANC) and other political parties; and

- (e) The initiation by Pretoria, in the context of a suspension of violence on all sides, of a process of dialogue with a view to establishing a non-racial and representative government" (Mission to South Africa, 1986:p.142).

The last step, namely, the facilitating of dialogue and negotiations between the South African Government and the majority Black population of South Africa, was of direct concern to the EPG Mission.

The EPG Mission operated on the premise that although the first four steps "were formally distinct from the overriding objective to facilitate a meaningful process of dialogue and negotiations, their implementation would create the conditions, and generate the confidence, within which meaningful negotiations could take place."

The nature of the task set by the Heads of Government Meeting in Nassau, and the definition of their own role, namely, to act as a 'facilitator' in a process of negotiations involving all the relevant political formations, were typical of process intervention. Not only was the intervention seen as of short duration, but the EPG Mission made it clear that it was never its intention to be prescriptive about the kind of political system that ought to be established in post-apartheid South Africa. That remained the "prerogative and responsibility of the representatives of all the people of South Africa." Moreover, the nature of their intervention was seen to be voluntary, while they attempted to influence, and to some extent, regulate the interactions of the different parties. The EPG Mission was also requested by the Heads of Government Meeting in Nassau to intervene in the conflict.

Aware that their task and role was limited to that of a 'facilitator', the EPG Mission agreed upon a number of operational principles at the outset. These were :

- (i) First, it was decided that despite the considerable media interest in their mission, they would work "quietly and in non-public ways" (Mission to South Africa, 1986:21). This meant that, while their mission was in progress, they would make no public statements or respond publicly to what others might say about their work.
- (ii) Secondly, it was decided that their approach to all parties would be "non-confrontational".
- (iii) Thirdly, it was decided to allow for a "low-keyed preliminary visit" to South Africa by the two co-Chairmen, General Olusegun Obasanjo and Mr Malcolm Fraser, accompanied by Dame Nita Barrow. This visit was intended to make contact and to allay suspicions about the full Group and thus paving the way for the arrival of the other members of the EPG Mission.
- (iv) Finally, in gaining access to all the principal parties, the Group deliberately tried to "demonstrate its independence." Therefore, the Group travelled alone, without any government security personnel, and accompanied only by their own small secretariat.

The EPG Mission travelled extensively in the country and visited the Frontline States as well. Their various meetings included twenty-one meetings with Ministers of the South African Government, with leaders of political and other organizations, as well as with prominent academic, political, religious and community figures. Thus, ostensibly, the EPG Mission adhered to some of the

essential requirements for successful process intervention, such as, independence, a non-condemnatory disposition, fairness and acceptance that the eventual process of negotiations will be the responsibility of the parties most intimately involved in the conflict.

Yet, the EPG Mission failed in its attempts to facilitate dialogue and negotiations between the South African Government and the majority Black population of South Africa. Why was this the case? To this question some answers will be attempted in the following few pages.

By their own admission, suspicion among most of the "principal parties added to the difficulty and sensitivity" of their mission (Mission to South Africa, 1986:20). Among Blacks, for example, there was intense distrust of the policies of the Thatcher Government and of her own intentions. "This resulted in the perception that the Group was a product of the Thatcher Government's wish to oppose sanctions against South Africa and a mechanism to postpone effective international action against the South African regime!" Thus, from the outset, the EPG Mission had a major task to establish its independence and credibility. Suspicion was not limited to the Black community. The South African Government itself questioned the impartiality of the Group and expressed some misgivings about the composition of the EPG Mission. In this respect, the position and role of the two co-Chairmen, Mr Malcolm Fraser and General Olusegun Obasanjo, was questioned.

However, there were other more fundamental reasons which accounted for the failure of the EPG Mission. First, the launching of military strikes by the South African Defence Force (SADF)

into three neighbouring countries, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Botswana, while the EPG Mission was in the country, did much to undermine the credibility of the entire exercise. As such these military operations, whether deliberately planned to coincide with the EPG Mission or not, left little doubt about the South African Government's attitude when it was brought face to face with the prospect of real negotiations between itself and significant political formations such as the banned ANC.

Secondly, the EPG Mission showed that the conditions conducive to direct negotiations between the South African Government and the ANC were either not present at the time, or were perceived by both to be absent. In addition to this, both the South African Government and the ANC perceived that they were on the ascendancy. This perception militated against negotiations between these two principal parties.

Thirdly, there existed different conceptions on the part of the South African Government and the ANC on the nature of negotiations. Both of these parties had essentially a zero-sum perception of what negotiations are all about. Both shared the perception that negotiations meant persuading the other side to give up something or do something they do not want to do. Furthermore, that there existed no room for compromise and a mutually satisfactory outcome. The gains of one of the parties were seen to be at the expense of the other. In contrast to these perceptions, real negotiations means investing something in the interests of both parties and assisting them to achieve it. The task of a third party intermediary is to help the parties to generate 'better options'. The principal parties also perceived negotiations as a single event,

rather than as a process of extended bargaining and dialogue.

Fourthly, the time constraint - six months - imposed by the Heads of Government Meeting on the EPG Mission was unrealistic.

Fifthly, the political constraints on both parties - the South African Government and the ANC - prohibited meaningful negotiations. From the perception of the South African Government, negotiations with the ANC could entail considerable political risks, such as the following : the loss of political support to the right-wing parties; affording legitimacy to those forces bent on the overthrow of the present governmental system; the risk that the government might lose control of the process of reform; the prospect that the government might end up making all the significant concessions while getting little in return; the risk that by giving in to violence, the government itself might encourage more violence and, finally, that the outside world would not necessarily support the outcome of such negotiations.

From the position of the ANC, negotiations at that point in time would have carried risks that the movement could have done without. These might conceivably have included a combination of the following : Negotiations might have resulted in the ANC looking weak; lead to loss of support; undercut the potential for revolutionary change, and weakened the legitimacy of the organization.

Thus, on balance, both parties gained more from not negotiating, at least not at that point in time. This is not to say that the position will not change in future, but merely that the reasons for not negotiating outweighed those for negotiating, at that particular point in time.

Finally, the EPG Mission failed because the two principal

parties - the ANC and the South African Government - both failed to act upon the principle of 'reciprocity'. Significantly, both parties failed to respond positively to the notion of the suspension of violence on all sides.

In a more general sense, the EPG Mission failed because it took place in a climate of sanctions and other punitive measures being introduced against the South African Government. Not only did these developments affect the credibility of the Mission, but they also hardened the attitudes of the South African Government against foreign intervention in the internal affairs of the country.

The general conclusion thus, is that the EPG Mission, for some of the reasons previously discussed, failed to focus the interest of all the parties on ways of how to resolve the conflict, rather than on 'defeating the other side'. Thus, the principal parties did not experience the conflict as a 'shared dilemma', but rather viewed it in mutually-exclusive terms. However, having said that, the EPG Mission was significant from a theoretical point of view, for it highlighted the real limitations associated with this mode of third party intervention in a context of basic cleavage conflict.

Having concerned ourselves with the process of third party intervention and the variables that have a bearing upon such intervention, the focus now moves to a discussion of the complex problem of the most appropriate time for intervention.

7.7 Time sequence

Process intervention by a Third Party can only be successful if -

at the very least - some of the following conditions prevail :

- (i) All the parties are more interested in resolving their conflict than in 'winning' or defeating the other side;
 - (ii) Both parties have "a sense of communality and complementarity of interests";
 - (iii) Both parties are able to exercise "some control over the outcome of the negotiations;" and
 - (iv) Both parties "accept the legitimacy of the intermediary and are prepared to allow it to mediate in the conflict "
- (Bercovitch, 1984:94).

In addition to these conditions, it is widely accepted that the time of intervention may exercise a considerable influence over the success or otherwise of conflict resolution. Basically there are two positions on the question of the appropriate time for intervention. Some scholars argue for early intervention with a view to prevent the emergence of violent behaviour. Other scholars are in favour of intervention at a later stage in a conflict, arguing that this will enhance the prospects for resolution.

In either case, the stage at which intervention is initiated can affect the pattern and outcome of such intervention. While there is no general consensus on this issue, Douglas (1962) proposed that "a third party should not intervene too early before the conflict relationship has been properly clarified and understood." Edmund (1971) takes a different view, arguing that intervention is more likely to be effective if initiated at an early stage before the parties commit too many resources to their particular conflict."

Based on various case studies of actual intervention, it

seems that one can generalise by saying that intervention should not be premature before the issues in conflict have been adequately identified, clarified, and discussed by the parties themselves. If intervention takes place too early, the parties can hardly be expected to articulate a perception of the possible room for compromise, nor can they be sufficiently aware of the escalating costs associated with the conflict. As a general proposition, Bercovitch (1984:108), argues that once the parties become aware of their own ability to do something about the conflict, as well as of its increased costs, "signals the most propitious timing for intervention".

Timing defines to a considerable extent the circumstances of intervention. The latter are arguably most conducive to intervention when,"(a) the parties themselves experience problems with their own attempts at conflict resolution; (b) the warring parties come to the realization that they face an inescapable situation of escalation and increased costs; and (c) they are aware of the limitations associated with resorting to violent behaviour" (Bercovitch,passi

The above conditions emphasize the central importance of the development of a perception on the part of the warring parties that they are in need of assistance to help them to resolve their conflict relationship. However, such a perception is not a sufficient condition for third party intervention, it has to be complemented by a realization that the costs of the conflict have become intolerably high to both parties. Unless such a realization is present, and the warring parties share a perception that the continuation of conflict would undermine their own interests, third party intervention would both be unlikely and unsuccessful. This is a further

reason accounting for the failure of the EPG Mission and their attempts at third party intervention, because both the South African Government and the African National Congress (ANC) did not share such a perception at the time when the attempts at intervention were made. Both parties operated on the perception that they were on the ascendancy, a perception that militated against effective third party intervention and against negotiations.

In her controversial study of Conflict in Africa, Adda Bozeman emphasizes the importance of the African concept of "non-differentiated time" and its relevance to conflict resolution. She argues that in the African mind there exists no clear distinction between present, past and future. This "non-differentiated" conception of time complicates attempts at conflict resolution in the sense that it impacts not only on present circumstances, but on both the past and future developments.

7.8 Composition of the discussion format

There is no general agreement amongst scholars as to the composition and format of the 'ideal' discussion format. Kelman (1972:168:204), for example, argues that the 'ideal participant' should be someone outside the policy process, but 'highly influential' to it. Anthony de Reuck (1974:64-80), on the other hand, argues that in intensely destructive conflicts such as Northern Ireland and the Middle East, the 'ideal' participant is someone 'directly involved in the policy process'. Each of these two scholars arrives at his conclusion based on different hypotheses regarding the relationship of flexibility and adaptability to the policy process.

The entire issue of the composition of the discussion format needs to be further explored. In this respect, some possible areas for further research might include :

- (1) Does the type of representative make a difference to the process of conflict resolution?

Special emphasis might be placed on an analysis of the potential influence and importance of variables such as age, sex, educational background, socio-economic status, and ability to impact on the policy process. The various Problem-Solving Workshops examined in this study do not adequately deal with this problem.

- (2) Does the type of third party make a difference?

Here one might want to assess and contrast 'conflict analysts' in the Burtonian sense with 'case specialists' as suggested by Mitchell (1981:76-77), and 'coercive' with 'non-coercive' third parties, a distinction introduced by Bercovitch (1984).

- (3) What effect (if any) do numbers have on the process of conflict termination?

A useful avenue for further research might be to investigate if different ratios of third parties to conflict representatives would have an effect on the process of conflict resolution. Equally useful, might be to investigate situations where there are different ratios of one party's representatives to the other's.

The workshops examined in this study differ in terms of the nature and number of third party intermediation. In some workshops the number of consultants exceeds the number of

party representatives. In others the number of third party intermediaries is equal to the number of party representatives. Still others have the party representatives vastly outnumbering the third party.

- (4) What influence does time have on the discussion format?

Regarding this issue, useful avenues for further research might conceivably include the following : When is it more useful and constructive to have a single lengthy session as opposed to a series of short, intensive sessions?

- (5) How important is the setting?

Here, one would like to contrast public with private settings, and academic with non-academic settings. All the Problem-Solving Workshops examined in this study, agree that to enhance 'creative problem-solving,' it is vital to establish an alternative set of behavioural norms to those held by the parties to a conflict. The academic setting appears to be the most appropriate for this, with relatively unstructured discussions and a 'supportive' third party.

- (6) How important is the level of internal cohesion of the warring parties?

- (7) What role does structure of the discussion format play?

In this respect, it might be useful to contrast face-to-face interaction with those through a third party, fixed agendas with the absence of agendas, task-orientation with training orientation.

While there are other possible areas for further research, these would provide a useful starting point. In each of these seven areas, analysts have concluded that these variables affect the

process of conflict resolution, but the exact nature of the relationship is obscure. Thus, it would seem that the next logical step would be to analyse the nature of these relationships.

7.9 The relationship between the type of conflict and the relevance of techniques

An important question that deserves to be further explored, is whether the type of conflict has a bearing on the selection of techniques for its resolution? As a first step, it might be useful to consider conflict intensity' as an important variable that has an effect on resolution. The more important question, however, is whether the type of conflict has implications for the selection of techniques aimed at its resolution. For example, would ideological conflict demand different techniques for resolution than, say, a conflict of interest? Unfortunately, the different problem-solving workshops examined here, do not offer much guidance on this important question.

Not only is the empirical data from the various attempts at conflict resolution limited, but the analysts themselves have not adequately addressed this question. Moreover, this question is further complicated by the reality that not all conflicts are open to resolution, some may indeed become more destructive and escalate as a result of intervention. As argued elsewhere, the distinction between conflicts of value and conflicts of interests, is an important one that needs to be considered by a third party intermediary.

Based on the works of a variety of scholars, notably Rubin

(1983:135-147); Raiffa (1983:195-210); Deutsch (1982), and Fisher & Ury (1981), to name but a few, it seems that conflicts of value or ideological conflict, pose more complex problems of resolution than conflicts of interest. Moreover, conflict intensity (expressed in terms of the positions of parties on issues) complicates prospects for resolution. Under conditions of intense conflict, such as in the case of Northern Ireland, research has shown that third party intermediation and resolution are much more complex (Deutsch & Krauss, 1960; Krauss & Deutsch, 1966, and Rubin, 1983:143).

Thus, while Roger Fisher and William Ury's (1983) four maxims on conflict resolution, namely, "separate the people from the problem; focus on interests not positions; invent options for mutual gain; and insist on objective criteria" are useful, their approach is deficient in several respects. First, it does not deal with the problem that objectives and conflicting interests and values are pursued with different intensity by parties. Secondly, it fails to recognise that in some conflict situations, certain outcomes or advantages clearly dominate all other possible outcomes or advantages, and likewise with disadvantages. Hence, there should be provision for two additional outcomes, namely, (++) "an overwhelmingly significant advantage" and (--) "an overwhelmingly significant disadvantage" (Isard & Smith, 1982:364).

By definition, ideological or value conflict revolves around different conceptions of the desirable over prescriptive norms and beliefs which do or should govern behavioural patterns. Returning to South Africa, it is important to emphasize at the outset that the South African negotiation context is to some extent unique in itself, making analogies to previous African experience highly

dubious. To begin with, the proportion of whites to blacks is markedly higher in South Africa than elsewhere in Africa (with the notable exception of former French-ruled Algeria). Not only are the whites more securely entrenched with a higher stake in the system and more directly related to state power, but South Africa is a much more industrialised society than any other on the African continent. The growing middle class is dependent upon the state for access, benefits and security. Thus, until the costs of maintaining the status quo rise considerably (to the point where dominant elements within the ruling class perceive their interests to be threatened), bargaining seems unlikely to alter the basic rules of the political game as was the case in Zimbabwe (and then, only after a bitter and protracted civil war). To quote Heribert Adam (1983:132-133) in support :

"the costs of racial privilege maintenance are also increasing through heightened internal unrest, escalating guerrilla incursions and international ostracism. However, unlike the Zimbabwe situation, since blacks cannot force whites to negotiate their capitulation, the conflict remains an uneasy stalemate".

Therefore, because the South African context is different from that of the states to the north during their phase of decolonization, the process of conflict resolution and negotiation are likely to be an even more complex one.

Writing on the major constraints facing negotiations in South Africa, Rothchild (1987:9), mentions the reality that there is "a divergence on principles, not interests in South Africa".

"What is perceived to be at stake in South African conflict is not distributive interests, which are negotiable, but matters of principle". For many whites, the maintenance of group rights, separate schools and racially distinct residential areas, and the furtherance of capitalist economic relations are matters of principle over which compromise will be very difficult. Conflict resolution in the South African context clearly demands some formula which reconciles the legitimate demand for one person one vote and the right of all citizens to form political parties and compete for political power. However, this is easier said than done, especially given the perceptions of the opposing forces noted above.

7.10 Composition of the warring parties

Meaningful third-party intervention and negotiations require acceptable legitimate representatives who can speak for, and if necessary, exercise a degree of control over their constituents. Lack of legitimacy on the part of these representatives leads to a declining capacity for effective negotiations. The leaders of the respective parties may, under such conditions, find it virtually impossible to uphold their end of the bargain, resulting in disappointment and frustration about the negotiation process. Hence conflicts of value or interests within the ranks of the respective parties, are likely to complicate the process of arriving at decisions as well as implementing them. Moreover, in some cases, the longer the process of negotiations are put off, the more fragmentation is likely to occur, resulting over time in an even more complex negotiating context.

In present-day South Africa, there are clear signs of fragmentation within the major political formations. Not only are the whites divided linguistically and ethnically among the Afrikaners, English, Jews and others but, significant ideological divisions are apparent between the 'pragmatists', the small, but vociferous, 'radical left', the conservatives and the far-right.

On the black side divisions of an interest and ideological nature are also apparent, not only among the homeland leaders (witness the feud between the Republic of Transkei and Ciskei), Inkatha and the United Democratic Front (UDF) and its affiliates, notably the Natal Indian Congress (NIC), but also between the 'Charterists' (especially the African National Congress (ANC)) and the Black Consciousness Movements, such as AZAPO and the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC).

At the minimum, such potential cleavages will have to be papered over by leaders in both the white and black groupings if each side is to know whom it is bargaining with and is to be assured that its rival will be in a position to deliver on its promises. Alternatively, one major faction or political formation could strike a deal in the hope that the other groupings would eventually join with them, but it is a tactic fraught with uncertainty, especially in a deeply divided society such as South Africa.

As shown by the fate of the Commonwealth Mission to facilitate a dialogue between the major political formations in South Africa, external mediators are not, for the time being, in a strong position to influence outcomes in the South African political equation. The general weakness of third party intermediation in

this conflict stems from various factors. First , South Africa is not a colony in the sense normally understood by this term, ruling out external third party intervention of the type seen in Zimbabwe. Secondly, there seems to be few candidates left who have credibility and legitimacy with all sides in the current conflict. By their very nature, highly polarised situations leave little room for compromise, either for the parties themselves or for their possible external mediators."As the third party intermediary identifies strongly with either gradual reform or with liberation, it inevitably becomes unacceptable to some of the other political groupings, thereby forfeiting the high ground from which successful intervention might be launched"(Burton, 1986:105). Thirdly, the third party intermediary, if one could be found, would have limited inducements to offer to both extremes - the ruling National Party and the African National Congress - because both operate on a perception of total victory. Finally, few third party mediators would want to become so deeply involved in the highly polarised South African conflict to offer such incentives, and there is no certainty that even such an extensive involvement would be sufficient to bring about the desired outcome. However, third parties can facilitate change to some extent, but there are clear limits to what such a party can reasonably be expected to achieve.

7.11 Conclusions

This chapter has shown that, despite a growing body of literature on conflict resolution and third party intervention, the practice of the latter process and the problems associated with it has only been very recently studied systematically.

The most important conclusions reached with reference to third party intervention are the following :

- (a) The third party's theoretical understanding of conflict has implications for the mode of conflict resolution. For example, a subjective understanding of conflict will focus on changing social conditions rather than perceptions.
- (b) Successful third party intermediation demands some understanding of the causes of a conflict relationship. In some cases this might involve an understanding of the history of a particular conflict.
- (c) The basis of third party intermediation displays certain features of which the following are especially important : Such intervention is voluntary; designed to influence and regulate the interaction between conflicting parties; temporary; 'non-evaluative' and 'analytical' (assisting the parties to discover the sources of their conflict).
- (d) Third party intermediation must be seen as part of a more comprehensive process of conflict resolution.
- (e) Successful third party intermediation demands certain attributes from third parties, such as fairness; flexibility; legitimacy and independence.
- (f) There are two basic modes of third party intervention , namely, instrumental and process intervention.
- (g) Process intervention is affected by various variables of a situational, attitudinal, perceptual and rational nature.
- (h) A brief analysis of an unsuccessful attempt at third party intermediation in South Africa showed that there were fundamental reasons why the EPG Mission failed. These reasons

related to factors such as : the time factor; the composition of the warring parties; mutually exclusive perceptions that both principal parties were on the ascendancy and the fact that both parties could not be induced by the third party to negotiate.

- (i) The chapter concluded with a discussion of some theoretical avenues for further research. These included : the relevance of time sequence; the composition of the discussion format; the relationship between the type of conflict and the relevance of specific techniques, and the composition of the warring parties.

In the final chapter, an attempt will be made to summarize the major conclusions reached in this study.

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CHAPTER 8SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In this study an attempt was made to analyse the various problem-solving workshops associated with the work of John Burton and Leonard Doob and their associates. The study has shown that these workshops, devised to analyse and resolve conflict, are based on remarkably similar assumptions. The most important of these, are :

- (a) That individuals and nations act in their own interests, and that these interests are calculated on both rational and subjective grounds.
- (b) That in any conflict, the basic unit to be considered is the individual human being. Thus, these workshops are informed by the precepts of methodological individualism and aim to change individual values and (mis)perceptions.
- (c) Human nature is inherently open to adaptation, change and learning. Therefore conflict contains alterable components such as perceptions and costs.
- (d) In any situation of conflict, political constraints of some kind or another are needed to ensure the maintenance of social principles such as reason and justice.
- (e) Mediation is a learned technique as opposed to the traditional view that views it as 'an art.'
- (f) While conflicts differ in terms of their underlying sources and implications there are, nonetheless, common patterns in most conflicts.
- (g) Conditions in which conflicts can or cannot be resolved can be determined by the analyst.

- (h) Only the parties most directly involved can arrive at acceptable outcomes. The mediator only facilitates resolution. Resolution can and should not be imposed.
- (i) Despite objective conditions, conflicts are essentially subjective. The two most pervasive objective sources of conflict are position scarcity and resource scarcity.
- (j) Conflict is a relational phenomenon that manifests itself at different levels of interaction. Thus, it has to be resolved or terminated at different levels as well.

The study found that the workshops have been designed to fulfil two essential theoretical purposes : conflict analysis and conflict resolution. Therefore, the theoretical utility of the workshop approach has to be assessed on both of these counts. In a more general sense, this study concluded that the workshops show more strengths as tools for conflict analysis. Their utility to resolve social conflict is inherently limited.

This analysis has shown that the various conflict workshops have both strengths and serious weaknesses. The more important strengths include the following :

- (1) The workshops provide a useful setting for conflict analysis and learning about conflict and its dynamic.
- (2) The workshop setting lends itself to the preparation of more comprehensive negotiations and establishing some of the preconditions for agreement.
- (3) The informal setting associated with the workshop approach is conducive to improving communication between the conflicting parties, especially because of its non-committal nature.
- (4) Communication can take place with minimum commitment and risk to the participants.

- (5) The experience of the various workshops has shown that they are most useful in affecting changes in individual perceptions and values.
- (6) Workshops offer a novel and useful setting for a theoretical understanding of conflict.

However, this study has emphasized various limitations associated with the workshops of Burton and Doob. The following can be regarded as the most serious :-

- (i) Despite attempts to integrate the workshops with the broader policy process, these have remained remarkably distant from actual policy-makers.
- (ii) The success of the various workshops to transfer insights obtained in the workshop setting to the policy process has been - at best - mixed. In most cases no such transfer took place.
- (iii) In a more general sense, the various workshops have failed to integrate their respective approaches with more comprehensive understanding of conflict and its termination.
- (iv) The various workshops analysed in this study have shown great difficulty in changing group, communal or collective perceptions and values. Clearly, the strength of the workshop approach is at the individual - rather than at the group - or national level.
- (v) Whatever their individual merits, workshops do not serve as substitutes for more traditional modes of negotiation and conflict resolution. They can, however, provide the groundwork for broader negotiations.

- (vi) The absence of any reliable mechanism to ensure that the insights gained during the workshop are retained when the representatives return to their respective environments, remains a significant limitation.
- (vii) Some of the workshops - notably those of Doob and his associates - have shown a preoccupation with techniques and experimentation almost at the expense of serious analysis of the substantive issues in conflict.
- (viii) The absence of adequate follow-up research, makes the individual results and impact of the various workshops uncertain and problematic to determine.
- (ix) Failure of the various workshops to adequately explore specific issues relevant to the practice of conflict intervention is a major limitation.

On this point, the following factors are of special importance : the variables that influence the success or failure of such intervention; the kinds of conflict intervention (process and instrumental) and their implications for resolution; the composition and cohesion of the warring parties; the symbolic importance attached by parties to a conflict; and the time sequence.

This study has come to the conclusion that conflict workshops need to be integrated with a broader body of literature on bargaining theories and third party intervention so as to enhance their theoretical and operational utility. Therefore, some avenues for further investigation and research should explore both the practice and process of third party intervention. The major conclusions reached in this respect are :

- (A) The understanding of conflict by a third party has implications for the mode of conflict resolution. For example, a 'subjective' understanding of conflict will demand attempts at changing the perceptions of the warring parties. In contrast, an 'objective' understanding of conflict will focus on changing social conditions, rather than perceptions.
- (B) Successful third party intermediation requires an understanding of the causes or sources of a conflict relationship. In most cases this might involve an understanding of the history of a particular conflict.
- (C) The process and basis of third party intermediation display certain features, of which the following are especially important (such intervention is voluntary, designed to influence and regulate the interaction between conflicting parties) : temporary; 'non-evaluative' and 'analytical'.
- (D) Third party intermediation must be seen as part of a more comprehensive process of conflict settlement and resolution, rather than as a single event.
- (E) Successful third party intermediation seems to require certain attributes from third parties, such as fairness, basic 'analytical ability', flexibility, legitimacy and independence.
- (F) Following Bercovitch, a distinction between 'instrumental' and 'process' intervention needs to be drawn, for the mode of intervention has implications for the nature and duration of such intervention.

- (G) Process intervention is influenced by a diversity of variables of a 'situational', 'attitudinal', 'perceptual' and 'rational' nature.

Finally, this study has shown that despite an extensive and growing body of literature on conflict, the practice of third party intervention - especially within the workshop setting - and the problems associated with it, has only recently been studied systematically. It is in this respect that this study endeavours to be of some practical value, for the phenomenon of conflict and its termination - also in South Africa - will continue to pose a challenge to mankind.

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