CHAPTER-IV

METHODS OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Despite the range of definitions, the methods used for handling conflict usually build upon the assumption that a solution can be found, and needs to be found, within the institutional and structural framework available. By and large, such methods address symptoms—which we might term ‘disputes’—rather than fundamental causes. Some form of compromise usually evolves. ‘External’ forces are viewed as helpful, whether laws, traditions, or historical precedents. Customary methods for addressing conflict include mediation, conciliation, arbitration, adjudication, negotiations, and legislation, that is, approaches that in general assume that a solution can and must be found. When a conflict is structural or involves indispensable human needs, the possibility exists that no solution will be found. Ury\(^1\), Brett, and Goldberg\(^2\) note that interests, rights, and power constitute part of any dispute.

Conflict scholar John Burton has identified three types of human motivation: needs, values, and interests. Needs are ‘universal and primordial, and perhaps genetic’. They do not change. Values, according to Burton, are culturally specific customs and beliefs distinctive to individual communities. Interests, he notes, change according to

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circumstances. Some contend that a conflict pertains to immovable resources, such as rivers, lakes, mountains, or mineral deposits, whereas disputes involve more transient and ephemeral elements. Regardless, caution is called for to avoid oversimplification. Also, Burton considers a dispute to be a situation in which the issues are negotiable, compromise is possible, and changing institutions or structures is not obligatory. By contrast, conflicts stem from human needs that cannot be compromised. Burton goes on to define a conflict as settled when it is managed, negotiated, or suppressed. All or some of the parties relinquish something, and social or legal norms (similar to rules) are involved in the relinquishment. Some enforcement or coercion may be needed to hold the parties to the settlement. Conflicts have been described as existing "whenever incompatible activities occur", when two people wish to carry out acts which are mutually inconsistent, when there is "a state of tension between two actors irrespective of how it has originated or how it is terminated", when there is "the active striving for one's preferred outcome which, if attained, precludes the attainment by others of their own preferred outcome, thereby producing hostility", and "when one individual, community, nation, or even supranational bloc desires something that can be obtained only at the expense of what another individual or group also desires".  

Conflicts can occur between many varying combinations of parties and for a great many different reasons. And they may also take various forms: from personal quarrels, through family, clan and

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community disagreements; disagreements between individuals and larger groups; disputes between political parties or workers and management; religious and ideological conflicts; to various forms of international disputes. Conflicts "may arise from differences in information or belief...may reflect differences in interests, desires or values...may occur as a result of a scarcity of some resource such as money, time, space, position [which includes success, pride, authority, status, recognition, etc.]...or...may reflect a rivalry in which one person tries to outdo or undo the other".5

The diversity of parties to, and motivational reasons for, conflicts make a precise definition of this expression difficult, if not impossible. For these reasons Fink suggests that a broad definition be used. Although he was specifically dealing with social conflicts, his definition is useful for personal as well as national disputes. A conflict, according to this definition, is any "situation or process in which two or more social entities are linked by at least one form of antagonistic psychological relation or at least one form of antagonistic interaction".6

In Fink's definition, "psychological antagonisms" include such things as incompatible goals, mutually exclusive interests, emotional hostility, factual or value dissensus and traditional enmities; while "antagonistic interactions range from the most direct, violent, and unregulated struggle to the most subtle, indirect and highly regulated forms of mutual interference".7 In other words: A conflict emerges whenever two or more persons (or groups) seek to possess the same

6 Ibid., p. 457.
7 Ibid.
object, occupy the same space or the same exclusive position, play incompatible roles, maintain incompatible goals, or undertake mutually incompatible means for achieving their purposes.  

Conflicts need not have obvious causes, such as a precipitating incident. In all relationships, whether interpersonal or otherwise, there occasionally occurs some form of behaviour which annoys, causes tension to, or engenders resentment in one of the parties involved. These feelings or the behaviour patterns causing conflicts generally pass with little notice. Occasionally, however, they do lead to open conflicts. The term "conflict" implies a situation in which both actors, or groups of actors, are aware of the incompatibility. Deutsch calls this position "manifest conflict" to distinguish it from the underlying tension or "underlying conflict" out of which it may grow. Some small incident may trigger a manifest conflict which may not be concerned with the same issues as the underlying conflict. Conflicts, therefore, need not always be about what they seem: "'Manifest' conflict often cannot be resolved more than temporarily unless the underlying conflict is dealt with or unless it can be disconnected and separated from the underlying conflict so that it can be treated in isolation."  

Nader and Todd have broken down conflict situations into three distinct evolutionary phrases. First, there is a "grievance" or "pre-conflict stage" in which an injustice, or grounds for resentment or complaint are perceived by one party. This is followed by what they

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10 Ibid.
call the "conflict stage" where the aggrieved party opts for confrontation and communicates his feelings to the offending party, that is, both parties are now aware of antagonism. Finally, the conflict enters the "dispute stage" when it becomes public, and third parties become involved.

Conflicts may move from the first to the second phase because of the discovery of a hitherto unknown incident, or the shift could result from one incident too many within a whole string of events, or one that is qualitatively different from the rest. Such "trigger events", however, may be only part of the reason for escalation. The role of outsiders in potential dispute situations must also be taken into account. They may play an important part in either precipitating a conflict into the dispute stage, or preventing the movement of such development. Fitzgerald et al. have noted that an audience can be instrumental in the precipitation of conflicts in situations where an action may otherwise have been scarcely noticed, e.g., where a loss of face occurs. Outside supporters may also precipitate a conflict by bringing otherwise unnoticed behaviour to the attention of one of the parties. Not only can such outsiders give support and aid in the articulation of the problem, but, conversely, they can explain that the party involved is being unreasonable or overreacting, or that there is too much to lose in such a conflict.

Once a conflict has become apparent and open disputing has commenced, there are many ways of trying to bring about a resolution. A conflict can be said to be resolved, for instance, when both parties have given up any hope of changing or amending the situation. In the Gandhian dialectic, however, conflicts can only be said to have been
resolved when all parties are satisfied with the outcome, that is, "when some mutually consistent set of actions is worked out". Such solutions obviously greatly reduce the fragility of resolutions.

Since the causes for the conflicts are multiple due to changing situations, the methods to deal with and respond to conflict cannot remain single and un-dimensional. Albert Einstein said, "The significant problems we face today cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them." Thus we require multiple and more creative approaches to respond to conflict to transform them more constructive and relevant to the situation. This will not happen through repetitive way of using the normative techniques of conflict resolution. Now, what it requires is, in-depth study on various dimensions and dynamics of conflict and the more effective and creative way of coping them with to understand the various images of conflict, to stress the values on the methods of conflict resolution, to remove the existing inertia in the development and to recognition of the new techniques of conflict resolution, an in-depth knowledge, awareness and creating a new outlook and understanding on conflict and conflict resolution became the need of the hour. This necessitates the need for education on conflict resolution. To bridge the gap between the knowledge and action in conflict resolution, intensive training and wider exposure in this field becomes necessary. In order to improve the human condition at the micro and macro levels, education, research and training in conflict studies that is now phrased, as 'Conflictology' is needed. This comes very much under the purview of the academic field.

Ways of Dealing Conflicts

Conflict is further classified into destructive and constructive conflicts on the basis of the conflict process. Deutsch defines this as "a conflict clearly has destructive consequences if its participants are dissatisfied with the outcomes and they feel they have lost as a result of the conflict. Similarly, a conflict has productive consequences, if the participants are satisfied with their outcomes and feel that they have not lost as a result of the conflict".12

Destructive conflicts tend to escalate a cyclic conflict and violence and may develop conflict helix. However, Deutsch's explanation points out that conflicts can be transformed into productive, if it is dealt in a cooperative rather than in a competitive way. Cooperative behaviour springs out when the conflicting parties understand the nature and dynamics of conflict, dispels the misconception of conflict as complex, violent, destructive, threatening, humiliate and dangerous and develops the knowledge, skills and the ways of dealing with conflicts.

Conflicts are intrinsically not bad or destructive. It depends upon how it is being waged to arrive at its end product, which is subject to moral judgment. "Social conflict can be waged destructively and can end in chaos. But it can also be waged constructively; it can be creative and can eventuate in a new and more harmonious and encompassing social organisation that existed prior to its initiation and resolution."13

Conflicts can be waged in different ways.

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According to Anthony de Reuck, Conflict can be terminated in three ways. They can be determined or settled or resolved.\(^\text{14}\) That is to say conflict can be brought to a conclusion so won or lost (determined); the outcome can be decided by external forces (settled); or they can be transformed into problems for rational solution and resolved either at minimum lost or even possibly with gain to all parties (resolved).

Determination of conflict is a process of forcible imposition of the will of the mightier party on the other.\(^\text{15}\) Here ‘force’ refers to physical might, cognitive efficiency or psychic superiority. The weaker party may be lowered down, exterminated or coerced so as to give the mightier a win. Conflict can also be terminated through suppression by the superior party. The result brought forth through imposition or suppression would be short lived, for such methods do not extirpate the root conflict. In addition, such methods give rise to better enmity. Settlement of conflict generally is brought about by a third party negotiation\(^\text{16}\) or it would be a compromise which the parties feel they have to accept because neither party has the resource to oppose it or to continue with the conflict. At best settlement reduce the level of intensity of conflict behaviour but leaves the conflict situation untouched.

Resolution\(^\text{17}\) implies a solution acceptable to all concerned, which does not sacrifice any basic interest and which no party will later wish to

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\(^\text{15}\) Ibid., p. 198.

\(^\text{16}\) Ibid.

repudiate. Resolution removes the very ground of dispute by eliminating or transforming the conflict situation.

"Lumping it" and Avoidance

Many grievance situations do not get to the conflict stage. Rather than being resolved, they are sidestepped by the resignation or exit of one party. This happens either by the process of "lumping", that is, ignoring the issues that gave rise to the problem, or "avoidance" which entails removing oneself from the situation giving rise to the grievance – for example, terminating a relationship. These procedures have obvious costs for the aggrieved person and in the long term may be no solution at all – merely exchanging actors rather than changing the pattern of interaction that caused the dispute. The reasons why these patterns of behaviour are resorted to include a socialised ethic of not causing trouble, feelings of powerlessness, lack of negotiating skills, fear and cost of courts or, according to Felstiner, a lack of suitable alternatives. He claims that in our society "where non-governmental institutionalised mediation of interpersonal disputes are infrequent, some of the slack may be absorbed by avoidance."\(^{18}\) The notion of avoidance is that a party may change his behaviour on account of the dispute in such a way that his relationship with the other disputant is, at least temporarily, shrunk or terminated. The dispute, although not settled, is thus no longer a matter which the disputant believes he ought to do something about.

The interaction between the conflicting parties are withdrawn or suspended temporarily by keeping distance from each other unilaterally or bilaterally or forcibly. According to Boulding “There are three forms

\(^{18}\) Ibid.
of avoidance or lumping. One party may simply remove itself simply from the field; the avoiding party here does all the work here.\textsuperscript{19} It is called withdrawal. This kind of behavior may be due to fear or feeling powerless, disinterest in pursuing them or for strategic reasons. The third form is where one party forcibly removes the others. This is called the conquest. Conquest is the extreme form of avoidance in which one party removes forcibly others, temporarily or permanently, with coercion, which may be organized successfully. Very often this is responded with stiff opposition, resistance, other aggressive ways and violence.

While "lumping it" has the disadvantage of condemning an individual to continue living in a tension-creating situation, avoidance behaviour also has a great many costs associated with it – both internal and external. If one "solves" a dispute by severing the relationship with a close friend or leaving a job, the effort taken to find a new friend or job (and the risk that they may not be as good as the old) are the internal prices paid for choosing this mode. These costs could be social, economic or psychological. The psychological cost of avoidance may include attendant feelings of guilt. When an individual limits a relationship which is socially or personally expected to be intimate or extensive, he may be disturbed by his own breach of social conventions or of his own standards or by his failure to communicate further with a person who has a reasonable expectation that disputes between them will be worked through rather than avoided.\textsuperscript{20} The external costs are those imposed upon an ex-friend or an ex-employer who must also either find new friends or employees or do with fewer. The avoider may even gain


\textsuperscript{20} Ibid.
benefits by way of feelings of satisfaction from imposing these costs, but then they may lead to further internal costs if the avoided party decides to retaliate against the avoider. Still, further costs can be incurred by the redirection of hostility that has not dissipated after avoidance measures have been taken. This redirected hostility could be aimed at either an available non-disputant or against the self, creating further external and/or internal cost.

Coercion

Coercion can readily be resorted to in conflict situations where one party feels powerless to conduct the dispute in any other way; where power disparities are so great that reciprocity need not be considered, where concern over the crucial issues involved gives way to concern over not yielding, or where "loss of face" becomes an issue. Challenges to beliefs, status and wants continually confront individuals and groups. The usual response to such challenges is opposition, often aggressive, and this can lead to violence. When the resources over which the dispute arose are tangible (money, property, etc.), the dispute can presumably be terminated by sharing, by compromise or by increasing the goods available. Swingle clearly points out that this is not possible with intangible resources (such as beliefs or concepts of "winning" and "not yielding"). In these situations, winning is the value sought and if winning is to have any value, there can be only one winner. He claims that a major factor in "maintaining conflict at a high level of violence is that of the protagonists defining negotiable conflict
(focal issue a divisible resource) as non-negotiable (focal issue a non-divisible resource such as "winning").

The problem of "loss of face" must not be underestimated in conflict situations. Even in disputes over the largest possible stakes, it can be of paramount importance – for example, in the Cuban missile crisis "face" and "pride" as well as "security" were considered important. The need for allowing the Soviets a face-saving way out of the situation was stressed by several of the President's advisers. Robert Kennedy, the then American Attorney-General, admitted: Neither side wanted war over Cuba, we agreed, but it was possible that either side would take a step – for reasons of "security" or "pride" or "face" – that would require a response from the other side which, in turn, for the same reasons of security, pride or face, would bring about a counter response and eventually an escalation into armed conflict.

Rapoport, in a very useful typology, classifies conflicts as either fights, games, or debates. While we shall return to the notion of "debate" as an ideal for the resolution of conflicts, it is interesting to note here what he says of the other two: "......the essential differences between a fight and a game.....is that while in a fight the object (if any) is to harm the opponent, in a game it is to outwit the opponent . . . a fight can be idealised as devoid of the rationality of the opponents, while a game on the contrary, is idealised as a struggle in which

complete "rationality" of the opponent is assumed.24 A fight (attempted mutual coercion), therefore, involves no strategy. It is blind – each adversary merely reacts to situations as they arise. Such a method of dealing with conflict has the obvious disadvantage that the conflict can never be truly "resolved" and, like the game of "chicken", is dangerous, forcing a protagonist to expose himself to risk of loss (usually substantial) in order to threaten the opponent. In other words, although threat may be expressed unilaterally, punishment tends to be bilateral.25

**Negotiation**

When facing a conflict there are alternatives to coercion or the reliance upon the judgement of third parties. Like mediation, negotiation is a search for an outcome that is adequately suitable to both parties, but unlike mediation, the dispute is settled bilaterally, that is, the two parties are themselves the decision makers.

The first two of the above methods can be termed competitive modes of conflict resolution, being generally characterised by the presence of a third party with decision making powers, coercive power, emphasis on norms, looking at past behaviour, verdicts, zero-sum decisions and guilt findings. The latter two examples, on the other hand, can be termed compromise modes. They are characterised by the bilateral meeting of the parties involved, the lack of coercive power, emphasis on the pursuit of interests, looking to the future of the

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relationship, agreements, compromise decisions and the avoidance of guilt or innocence as an issue.²⁶

Negotiations may be either formal or informal. Formal negotiations are typified by labour-management contract discussions, meetings - between heads of state and performance appraisals, for example. Informal negotiations occur all the time, without the same levels of expectation and social definition. For instance, an informal negotiation may take place between a married couple over who will drive the children to school. In this example, the parties may not even recognize that they are in a negotiation, yet they still depend upon one another for an outcome, and they are both working towards resolving a divergence of interest between them.

Negotiations are attempts to arrange a new combination of some of the common and conflicting interests of the parties but they can only result in agreement "if there exists at least one set of terms that each party would prefer to having no agreement."²⁷ Negotiators have various choices open to them, they can accept the other party's offer or propose a preferred alternative. They can also push the dispute to the position where the intervention of a third party becomes a probability either "by refusing to consider the issues further, by refusing to hear the other's views, or by walking out and refusing to return",²⁸ that is, by accepting the status quo. Lewicki et al. and Pruitt and Carnevale have broadened

²⁸ Tongeren, Paul Van, Exploring the Local Capacity for Peace - The Role of NGOs (Dossier, Italy: IUPIP International Course), 2000, p. 200.
the range of coverage in describing negotiation as a more generic social activity, not limited to the boardroom. Pruitt and Carnevale define negotiation as a ‘discussion between two or more parties with the apparent aim of resolving divergence of interest and thus escaping social conflict.”

A central characteristic of negotiation is interdependence. Lewicki et al. write, “Interdependent relationships are characterized by interlocking goals – both parties need each other to accomplish their goals.

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Negotiations have the advantage over the other methods of dispute settlement already discussed in that they are most likely to effect lasting resolution to conflict as well as reduce dependence on "experts" thereby making the parties self-reliant, giving them control over important decisions that need to be made concerning their own lives. As a dialectical process negotiations also occasionally aid the discovery of entirely new approaches to the problem. The outcome of a negotiation is

29 Pruitt, Dean G. and Peter J. Carnevale, Negotiation in Social Conflict (Buckingham: Open University Press), 1993, p. 2
essentially one that, in each party's opinion in the perceived circumstances, is at least satisfactory enough and is perhaps considered to be the best that is obtainable. It often represents a compromise between the parties' initial demands and expectations but there may be in part or whole, the joint creation of some new terms not originally conceived of by either party.\footnote{31}

Further than that, negotiations offer the opportunity for personal growth by exposing each party to the views of the other, providing a situation for learning – the decision being “the culmination of an interactive process of information exchange”.\footnote{32} This prevents personal, and in the long term and on a larger scale, social and national stagnation – when an agreement between the parties is reached "the position of each has been subtly changed not only by terms offered, but by its experience of the other and exposure to the other's persuasion".\footnote{33}

\textit{Persuasion}

Perceptual theorists define persuasion as “altering the person’s perception of any object of his attitude.”\footnote{34} It is a process by which a person’s attitude or belief is without duress, influenced by verbal communication. The Britannica Encyclopedia states that a person’s behaviour is affected by other factors too, e.g. physical coercion.\footnote{35} Persuasion is the right means of effecting change. Gandhi maintained

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\footnotetext{31}{Schellenberg, A. James, Conflict Resolution: Theory, Research and Practice (Albany: State University of New York Press), 1996, p. 234.}
\footnotetext{32}{Ibid.}
\footnotetext{33}{Spring, Ursula Oswald (ed.), Peace Studies from a Global Perspective (New Delhi Madhyam Book Services), 2000, pp. 204-214.}
\footnotetext{34}{The New Encyclopedia of Britannica, Vol. 14, 1974, p. 122.}
\footnotetext{35}{Ibid.}
\end{footnotesize}
that, “no man can claim that he is absolutely in the right and the other in the wrong.”\textsuperscript{36}

Everybody has the free will and right to decide their own. However, one can motivate and guide the wrong doer to understand the matter in a better way. That through Persuasion.

Conflict is a very complicated phenomenon. It is created by more than one cause. When a person is a part of social, cultural, environmental and biological systems their every act is influenced by these systems together. So, is their conflict behaviour. Correction of this malfunction should be through love and care and not through enmity and irreverence.

Persuasion works in two planes. One is intellectual plane-working with the mind and the other is moral plane working with the ‘Heart’. Persuading the mind is that the opponent is motivated in a manner that pleases/appeals him to see the other person’s view, understand it and accept it. It is getting the other’s co-operation to converge the minds that stand apart. In a situation of antagonism the minds are blocked by thick clouds of fear and distrust. So the first step of persuasion is allying for and distrust. This is done by first convincing the opponent that the conflict is not against him as a whole; it does not aim at liquidating him or even harming his position, but only against a particular issue in contention. If the person is against the wrong and not against the wrong doer then one has to demonstrate it in action, that is by abstaining from all violent acts and adopting friendly attitude. So, violence is forbidden. One has to be non-violent even on the face of

\textsuperscript{36} Gandhi, M. K., Hind Swaraj (Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House), Ch. XVII.
grave provocation and persecution. One will encounter every act of discourtesy with courtesy, of bullying with calm courage, of arrogance with humility, of evil with good and untruth with truth and violence with self-suffering.

Persuading one’s mind involves great deal of dialogue. The persuader takes at most care in choosing the language. Along with this appeal to mind, appeal to the wrong doer’s ‘heart’ too is made. This is moral persuasion. It is largely done by means of love and self-suffering not relating any violent attack of the wrong doer but suffering quietly.

Sympathetic reaction to violent behaviour will be morally a sound response. Suffering quietly all acts of violence and continue to be good will be a great appeal to the conscience of wrong doer. First the wrong doer, whose stereotypic mind anticipates a violent return, is stunned by an unconventional encounter. He could start feeling his even act as unjustifiable. That result in communication.37

Second, as there is no violent threat to the person or have otherwise spent on defense mechanisms and strategy formation.38 One’s mind is relatively free. This surplus time and free mind facilitate him to analyse the situation and what the other person says.

Thus appeal to the heart and mind becomes the method of persuasion in conflict situation. In a conflicting situation, sometimes persuasion itself is sufficient to motivate the conflicting party to arrive at settlement or conciliation. Or it may help to persuade the other to give

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38 Ibid.
up violence and come forward to more agreeable means of conflict such as institutional techniques like bargaining and arbitration.

*Bargaining*

Bargaining is a kind of dialogue which allows each party to put forward its demands. Demands can be ascertained by arguments over the merits and demerits of each party. Each side seeks to explore and exploit the values of the other side. “Because of the concept of variable value (where something is of more value to one party than to another), it is possible to give value without losing value. This is the idealized model of collective bargaining. Bargaining is a good opening for one to give the wrong doer detailed account of his evil deed and its unjustifiability and to convince him that it is so.

Similarly bargaining gives one the chance to get the opponent’s view point. It is an occasion to see the other side of conflict. If there is a reason in the opponent’s claim bargaining will reveal it. It helps to arrive at a just and mutually satisfactory end, i.e. collective victory.

*Diplomacy*

In the past, diplomats were drawn from the same social and economic class (upper), and in most cases they spoke the same language, literally: French. Although there is a long history of monarchs sending ambassadors to the courts of other rulers, it is generally agreed that the current system of diplomatic protocol was established by Cardinal Richelieu, the chief minister—some would say, chief manipulator—of the early-17th-century French king, Louis XIII.

Although there has always been a peculiar stiffness to official
diplomatic discourse and protocol, such formalities have evolved over many years so as to enhance precision of communication, and whenever possible, reduce the chances that personalities will interfere with formal and serious communication between governments. Historically, ambassadors were the personal representatives of one sovereign to the court of another, and this polite fiction is still maintained, even in the case of democracies: Upon their arrival, ambassadors typically present their credentials to the head of state of the host country. In modern times, electronic communication has largely bypassed the individual diplomat when it comes to the establishment of important international agreements, but the role of person-to-person contact, even at the highest levels, remains important.

Ironically, states communicate with each other least frequently and least clearly during war—precisely when such communication is likely to be the most needed. At such times, and occasionally when interactions become severely strained during peacetime, diplomatic relations are broken off, and each state recalls its ambassador. Otherwise, officials are available to correct possible misunderstandings, clarify positions, and when all else fails, simply to buy time, occasionally in the hope that tense situations will eventually blow over. As we shall see, diplomacy has failed in many cases; however, there have also been successes.39

Some Diplomatic Successes in Averting War

In 1987, Indian military exercises near the Pakistan border alarmed the Pakistanis, whose forces were mobilized in response. Soon,
more than 300,000 armed men were facing each other across a border that has known substantial violence in the past. Tensions gradually eased, however, via urgent diplomatic exchanges between the two sides; among other things, both agreed (verbally) to refrain from attacks against the other's nuclear facilities. Also in 1987, Greece and Turkey exchanged threats over Turkish plans to prospect for oil near several islands in the eastern Aegean that were under Greek ownership but very close to the Turkish mainland. Like India and Pakistan, these two states also have a long history of antagonism and warfare (Greece was long dominated by Turkey, as part of the Ottoman Empire, and the two states have also engaged in threats as well as fighting over the fate of Greek and Turkish ethnic nationals on the island of Cyprus). Once again, tensions were gradually cooled, at least in part because both sides feared to antagonize their North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) ally, the United States, with the possible cut-off in military aid that might ensue.

In many cases, multilateral diplomacy has negotiated an end to fighting; for example, termination of the wars in Bosnia and Kosovo, and an apparent peace agreement in Northern Ireland. It may be overly optimistic, however, to consider these to be diplomatic successes, since they may also be examples of diplomatic failures that resulted in war, followed eventually by diplomacy-assisted termination once one or both sides tired of the war's costs. (But even in this minimal sense, diplomacy can be profoundly useful, as a means whereby warring sides communicate their desire for peace.)

Some Diplomatic Failures

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Sometimes diplomats make things worse. They are human beings, after all, and as such, fallible. Moreover, although it is hoped that direct, personal interactions can reduce the likelihood that nations will resort to force in order to settle their differences, such interactions also provide the opportunity for interpersonal hostility. Perceived slights among rulers and diplomats have, on occasion, endangered the peace. Late in the 17th century, France and Spain nearly came to blows when a coach carrying the Spanish ambassador to England cut in front of the French Ambassador, on a London Street.

*Go-Betweens or Good Office*

There are several specific ways in which third parties can be helpful to disputants. First, they can serve as go-betweens, providing what is known as their "good offices." This may simply involve making a meeting place available, on neutral ground. The Scandinavian states, as well as Austria and Switzerland, have often made themselves available as sites for international dispute settlement; when in doubt, international diplomats typically meet in Geneva.

Since most Arab governments—except for Egypt and Jordan—do not officially recognize the state of Israel, it is especially important for third parties to provide a means of communication between them. Of course, when the third party is a high-ranking representative of a major power, he or she presumably does not merely act as a messenger, but also can engage in various forms of arm-twisting, for example, threatening to cut off economic or military aid unless some proposed compromises are accepted. This further suggests why some forms of diplomacy are best conducted in secret: It may be politically unacceptable, for example, for a state to appear to knuckle under to such
pressure, although it may be better for everyone concerned if it does so. At the same time, powerful countries are able to "sweeten the deal," as with the United States providing billions of dollars in aid to both Israel and Egypt in the aftermath of the Camp David agreements. The promise of similar assistance also underlines the prospects of further Arab-Israeli peace deals (as does the fact that with the dissolution of the Soviet Union, states such as Syria lost their prospect of assistance from their major backer).

During 1967, Greece and Turkey—both U.S. allies and NATO members—were threatening to go to war over Cyprus. The U.S. emissary, Cyrus Vance, eventually succeeded in persuading both sides to step down their military preparations and to accept an expanded role for the UN peacekeeping force already on that island. Alexei Kosygin, Soviet premier at the time, was similarly successful in inducing India and Pakistan to terminate their second Kashmir War (1966), in part by secret arm-twisting. In the early 1990s, the Norwegian foreign minister was especially influential in facilitating the Oslo Accords between Israel and the Palestinians, and in 1999, the president of Finland served as go-between when NATO forces and Yugoslavian president Slobodan Milosevic ended the war in Kosovo.

Third parties, if they have the respect of the contenders, can also serve a valuable role as "fact finders," ascertaining, for example, whether a disputed border was crossed, how many political prisoners are held in specified jails, how large the military forces involved are, or what the economic situation is in a particular region. International organizations, notably the United Nations, have been especially helpful in this respect, establishing various commissions of inquiry: to evaluate
conflicting claims. In certain cases, basic facts are in dispute; in others, the disagreement is not over numbers or other data, but rather over values—not over what is true, but what is right.  

*Compromise*

The most obvious, and in some cases the most common, negotiating technique is to compromise, that is, to reach an agreement that is in some sense intermediate between the demands of both sides. There are, however, several disadvantages to this method. For one, a compromise may leave both sides dissatisfied. In some cases, this may actually be desirable, so that a "fair" decision may be defined—only somewhat tongue in cheek—as one that leaves everyone equally unhappy. But one side's claim may in fact be just and the other's unjust; in such a case, a compromise simply rewards the unjust side while penalizing the just one. Compromise assumes that both contenders are equally worthy, so that "splitting the difference" between them will produce a fair settlement. But what if state A arbitrarily insists on imposing a 50% tariff upon all imports from state B, but refuses to allow B to tax its imports? Clearly a "compromise" that allows a 25% unilateral tariff would not be fair and is unlikely to be acceptable—at least, not to state B.

In certain cases, however, one side can "win" without the other "losing." For example, Franco-German relations were bedeviled through the first half of the 20th century by a dispute over ownership of the Saar region, a rich industrial sector of the Rhineland. Following World War I, occupation and mining rights to the Saar were ceded to

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France; French control was reasserted after World War II. But the region's population was (and still is) overwhelmingly German, and the governments in Paris and Bonn eventually cooperated to resolve this issue: After a plebiscite in 1955, France permitted the Saar to rejoin West Germany. This negotiated agreement, in which France ostensibly "lost," served everyone well, since it proved to be a cornerstone for subsequent Franco-German cooperation and friendship.

Compromises are often the outcome of what has been called "positional bargaining," in which each side stakes out a position, and then holds to it. Positional bargaining clearly does not encourage flexibility and reasonable stances or attitudes; rather, intransigence is rewarded, and willingness to compromise (or even to suggest compromise) is penalized. Thus, in positional bargaining the participants are rewarded for staking out a "hard" position and sticking to it, and penalized, in turn, for being "soft." As a result, "good" bargainers are those who remain relatively intransigent—that is, who make it difficult or unlikely that an agreement will be reached. Fortunately, there is a third way, known as "integrative bargaining" or "principled negotiating."42

Integrative or principled bargaining tries, among other things, to separate the actual dispute from the underlying interests of each side. The goal is to focus on the latter and avoid getting bogged down in the former. As negotiators Roger Fisher and William Ury recount, consider the story of two sisters who quarreled over an orange; they decided, finally, to compromise, each getting one half. One sister then proceeded to squeeze her half for juice while the other used the peel from her

42 Ibid., p. 284.
portion to flavor a cake. By compromising—an old and honorable solution—they overlooked the integrative solution of giving one all the peel, and the other all the juice.

Mediation

Mediation is another method for handling conflict and is becoming an increasingly popular term in the discussion of conflict resolution. Folberg and Taylor\(^4\) define mediation as 'the process by which the participants, together with the assistance of a neutral person or persons, systematically isolate disputed issues in order to develop options, consider alternatives, and reach consensual settlement that will accommodate their needs'. The definition of mediation is broad in its coverage and can incorporate a variety of different people in many different settings. Today mediators can be found in the legal profession, for example. Lawyers, trained as mediators, seek to resolve differences between their clients through the use of this informal process, in order to save court costs. Other places where mediation is found include labour-management relations, for example. The US Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service was established to provide mediation in labour-management disputes. Mediation is now used to facilitate the effective and smooth dissolution of marital contracts, reconcile criminal victims and offenders, address workplace disputes, handle workplace grievances and settle petty disputes in neighbourhoods.

Variations on mediation also exist. 'Med-arb' is a hybrid process, whereby a mediator seeks to facilitate agreement between parties, until such time as it is clear that the parties cannot reach an agreement. At

\(^{43}\) Folberg, Jay and Alison Taylor, Mediation (Jossy-Bass: San Francisco), 1984, p. 7
that point the mediator 'switches hats' and takes the role of arbitrator and imposes a solution on the parties. This hybrid process is most commonly used in labour-management disputes. Another variation on the mediation theme is conciliation. In the USA 'conciliation' and 'mediation are used almost interchangeably, whereas elsewhere in the world 'conciliation' takes on a slightly different meaning. Rather than being a neutral third party, a conciliator is not neutral to the public good. Conciliators are used, for example, in Australia by the New South Wales Anti-Discrimination Board. The conciliator may be neutral in terms of the dispute between the parties, but is not neutral in terms of the relationship between the dispute and state and federal legislation. Conciliators often use much more directive language in an effort to lead parties to an agreement that upholds legislative dictates.44

Arbitration

Arbitration is another often-mentioned process in handling conflict. "Goldberg et al.45 describe arbitration as often and voluntary, final and binding. This means that in most arbitration settings the use of arbitration is up to the parties themselves, and its outcome is agreed by the parties to be the final word on the dispute. This is the ideal, but of course reality may lag somewhat. Arbitration has been used in a variety of commercial and labour—management contexts to resolve problems, rather than go to court. The process grows out of a legal environment, and so it reflects many of the characteristics of legal discourse. Not all

45 Goldberg Stephen B. et al., Dispute Resolution (Boston: Little Brown and Co.), 1992
arbitration is voluntary. In some instances contracts may stipulate the use of arbitration as the method of resolving problems. Indeed, in some legislative contexts, arbitration has been mandated as the method of addressing disputes and conflicts.

There are variations in the conduct of arbitration. For example, classical arbitration occurs when both parties present their cases in a similar fashion to two sides in a legal case. The arbitrator hears both sides, weighs up the merits of the two sides and crafts an outcome for the parties. Final-offer arbitration, however, differs markedly from the classical form. Final-offer arbitration occurs with both parties presenting a case. The arbitrator may pick only one of the two cases; he or she cannot deviate from what is presented. In classical arbitration the parties tend to overstate their cases, knowing that the arbitrator will base his or her solutions on what is heard. In final-offer arbitration, because the arbitrator can only choose the case presented by one or other party, this tends to force both parties to be reasonable, in case the other party is more reasonable. Arbitration does nothing to address the underlying relationship between the parties. In this way it does nothing actually to resolve the conflict as such. It may resolve the outstanding issue between the party, but feelings of ill will and the like are left unaddressed.

When physical aggression (or other coercive measures) or avoidance fails to successfully terminate a conflict situation, or where interpersonal (or intergroup) negotiations break down, the use of third parties to facilitate a settlement through mediation, adjudication or arbitration becomes likely. Although unsuccessful negotiations often result in third-party intervention (requested or otherwise), it is
proposed to deal with these latter methods of conflict resolution first, because, when properly conducted, interpersonal negotiations maximise the probability of a lasting resolution with the minimum of cost to either side. Of the many disputes where negotiations fail relatively few end up before a court, instead one or both parties may decide, even at this late stage, to resort to avoidance or to some unofficial "forum" that "is part of (and embedded within) the social setting within which the dispute arose, including the school principal, the shop steward, the administrator etc." These situations may involve mediation, arbitration or adjudication. In mediation the third party aids the disputants in reaching an agreement. Both disputing parties have agreed to the presence of the mediator who suggests solutions without any decision-making power. In arbitration situations the disputants have voluntarily abdicated their own decision-making power in favour of that of the arbitrator. In these cases the protagonists explain their perceptions of the conflict situation to a third party whose power to make a decision they have agreed to accept beforehand. An example of such a situation is where two parties voluntarily go to court to achieve the final resolution of a conflict.

**Adjudication**

Adjudication is the process with which most people are familiar. Many litigants use the courts in an effort to resolve disputes and conflicts between parties. Courts, however, are not designed to address relationship problems, but rather to resolve points of law. As such they may work very well through

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the adversarial system, but resolving points of law may not always provide solace in conflict situations. In fact, resolving an outstanding point of law may do nothing but exacerbate a conflict. The use of courts, however, is perhaps the most common institutional method employed in an effort to resolve conflicts and disputes. Ultimately, courts impose a settlement on the parties, who have no option but to accept the opinion of the court. In many ways the courts are deemed the final, social stopping-point' of many disputes and conflicts. Of course, the feelings and emotions that go with conflicts may not be resolved by a simple act of the court. Resolving these aspects of conflict has been deemed by many to be the province of mediation. Yet even there, mediation does not always accomplish its goal. In consideration of any conflict-handling process it is useful to recognize the distinction between process and content. In negotiation, the parties must attend to the ways in which the negotiation is conducted, as well as to what is being said. In mediation, arbitration and adjudication the situation is a little different. Parties to the conflict take on greater responsibility for the content, leaving considerations of process to the third party. The mediator, arbitrator, and judge become responsible for handling process. The distinction, between process and content informs the majority of conflict handling literature, though the lines are often blurred.47 Therefore, an adjudication is an autocratic solution whereby the third party has the authority to intervene in the dispute even where one or neither of the protagonists wish it, give a decision and enforce compliance with it. These situations generally occur where one party to a dispute takes court action compelling the other party to join the proceedings even without his or her consent, or where, for example, an interpersonal dispute leads to a breach of the

criminal code and, through the intervention of the police, ends up in court. Except for the type of dispute illustrated by the preceding example many disputes that go to court for arbitration and adjudication do not reach the trial stage because of abandonment, withdrawal or settlement.

As Aubert has pointed out, the movement of a conflict from private bargaining to litigation before a law court involves the risk of total loss for one of the parties. This obviously is not in the interest of either side, especially when court costs are taken into account. Why then is this "non-rational" behaviour resorted to? Conflicts are generally terminated in one of two ways: compromise, where both parties win something and lose something, or by a decision based on fault, where the outcome is one of zero-sum, that is, the winner takes all. Some writers believe that in Western industrial societies we, unlike less complex societies, ever increasingly rely on the latter model: As societies become more complex and stratified, and hence tend to emphasise rule enforcement as the objective in settling disputes, a different set of institutions is required for the maintenance of order. Instead of institutions directed towards the achievement of compromise and the maintenance of solidarity, institutions designed to sanction the breach of norms are required.

Others, like Unger, claim that as societies become ever more complex, become welfare and corporate states, the opposite trend operates. The rule of law is undermined and tendencies creating a shift towards democratic communities that "look for an alternative to the idea

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48 Ibid.
of legality in the notion of a community bound together by a shared experience and capable of developing its own self-revising customs or principles of interaction are strengthened. The first scenario points to inbuilt biases in our social structure against compromise and mediation, the second, as the shift from the ideological to reality occurs, sees a great possibility for compromise to play an expanded role in the solution of social conflicts. Whichever scenario is accepted, it must be noted that some forms of conflict are inherently less amenable to negotiation or compromise. In situations of scarcity (that is, where a conflict of interests exists) the usual remedy is achieved through negotiation, but where there is a dissensus (that is, the conflict is one of values) these remedies are not quite as obvious: As long as a conflict of interest remains relatively pure, it is amenable to solutions through bargaining and compromise on the condition that there is something to give and something to take on both sides. When a clash of interests has become associated with a dissensus, bargaining and compromise may be harder to achieve, while the conflict has on the other hand, become amenable to a solution through the intervention of law in the broadest sense.

Although clashing values by themselves may lead to overt conflicts, where one party attempts to convert the other, they tend to result in avoidance. While clashing interests tend to bring people together and increase the likelihood of disputes, clashing values tend to keep people apart creating little likelihood of conflict or the need for resolution. A combination of the two types of clashes, of value and interest, therefore, facilitates the appearance of the dispute in the

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50 Ibid.
51 Ibid., pp. 34-58.
courtroom – the clashing interests bringing the parties together and the clashing values making compromise difficult. Besides these "built in" tendencies there are many other factors which can come into play steering a conflict into the generally zero-sum (or to use Aubert's phrase "non-rational") procedures of arbitration and adjudication. These include the overestimation of the likelihood of victory by both sides, the provision of a "moral test case for the individual, which the settlement out of court could not have", the ability to pass costs on to others, an unwillingness to bargain over one's perceived moral rights, ill Feelings towards the opponent which preclude negotiations, negotiations with an opponent being seen as moral weakness making defeat at the hands of a judge preferable, the setting of precedent on which similar future claims can be based, the role played by outsiders who may create fear of being seen as having sold out, and the avoidance of responsibility and blame for not having done enough to defend the interests involved – especially if the litigant is not alone in the dispute, for example, if family, partners or colleagues are also involved.

Conflict Elimination

Lars Bergsrom gives a different patterns of conflict elimination. He distinguishes between conflict elimination (or conflict resolution in a strict sense) and conflict suppression. A conflict which is merely suppressed continues to exist, even though roughly speaking, it has somehow become latent is less likely to give rise to violence or hostility in the near future. A conflict is suppressed if the parties have accepted to live with it. Thus certain kind of compromise represents suppression

rather than elimination of conflicts. Another form of suppression is avoidance; according to Boulding, that is probably the commonist ‘method of ending conflict’.  

Reconciliation is one form of conflict elimination; Bergstrom brings out three main types of elimination:

CONFLICT ELIMINATION

a. Elimination of Parties: A conflict of interest between two parties is automatically eliminated as soon as one or both of them cease to

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exist. Such a state may be brought about by murder, capital punishment, genocide or as a result of natural causes. However, this practice is totally unacceptable.

Notice that, at the collective level it may also be possible to bring end to conflict through structural change as when a group of individuals dissolves or is dissolved. Similarly, class conflicts are eliminated in a society were class systems is abolished (structural dissolution).

b. Elimination of Incompatibility: A conflict in which the interests of the parties are neither logically nor empirically incompatible, it might so happen that the barrier to their Joint satisfaction breaks down or is removed and they are no longer incompatible. It would be the same as removing the barriers between different religious groups by creating a common understanding of the oneness of God and humane as the creation of God, removing prejudice and making their different ways of worshiping God compatible. Again consider the conflicting interest of two groups who want to achieve a particular object depriving the other. Here conflict can be solved but just removing the ‘object’ out of scene or by making it unimportant. In the former case it has been possible to satisfy the interest of both parties and in the latter neither parties. In both cases conflict is thus eliminated.\(^55\)

c. Re-conciliation: In this case both parties and their incompatibility remain intact. Only their object of interest and attitude change. Unlike the other forms, this presupposes a genuine change or modification of at least some of the interests in question. They have to be changed or

\(^{55}\) Ibid., pp. 21-217.
modified in such a way that they are no longer incompatible. Suppose for example, that ‘X’ is in ‘A’s interest, that ‘Y’ is in ‘B’s interest and that X and Y are incompatible. These interests are reconciled and conflict is eliminated, if A and B can reach an agreement or settlement in which X and Y are replaced by a common alternative ‘Z’ so that Z is now A’s interest and also in B’s interest. But neither X nor Y is in A’s interest and also in B’s interest.56 We may compare this with Boulding’s definition according to which reconciliation is that type of conflict situation: in which the value system of the images of the parties so change that they now have common preferences in their joint field, they both want the same state of affairs or position in the joint field and so conflict is eliminated.57

However, it might be held that genuine reconciliation involves more than this. It might be required, for example, that the parties do not consider the settlement in question implied upon them believed that the settlement is just. These particular requirements are in fact suggested by Plamenatz.58 It should be noted that the chances for reconciliation between conflicting interests in a given case may vary with different interpretations of ‘interests’. People for example, generally donot distinguish between needs and wants. They attach more importance to thing of popular interest. A proper interpretation of what is a ‘need’ and a ‘want’ and which commodity falls on what category in a given society would help eliminate conflict of interests. When people donot understand the difference but are brought forth to reconciliation, the result would be suppression of conflict rather than elimination because,
although incompatibility is reconciled, the cause for incompatibility would be lurking in among the parties.

**Encapsulation**

Encapsulation is curbing the range of expression of conflict. It is "a procedure in which conflict parties agree on certain rules and parameters and certain of the more extreme conflict forms."\(^{59}\) In an endemic conflict situation the parties can come to a mutual understanding not to attack each other (no first attack) and to solve their problem through acceptable means. Such an understanding is a form of encapsulation.

Dahrendorf says that violence and escalation of conflict can be greatly avoided if conflict is ritualized and moderated. By ritualization, he means, acceptable institutional procedures. Agreement to follow such procedures would encapsulate conflict. Institutionalization of labour/management conflict is an excellent illustration of self-encapsulation, he indicates.\(^{60}\) Drawing boundary to conflict and introducing internal limiting factors are measures of encapsulation. Another form of encapsulation is, what Burton calls, 'cost analysis' by conflict groups collectively or individually.

**Transformation of Perception**

In most of the conflicts, besides the basic causes, the perception of each party about the other and about the objective of the conflict and their understanding of goal, together galvanize the conflict and

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59 Wehr, Paul, Conflict Regulation (Calcutta: West View Co.), 1979, p. 25.
60 Dahrendorf, Class and Class Conflict in Industrials (, 1995.
determine the nature of it. Parties to a conflict generally fall victim to mirror-image and stereotype. These prejudicial characters drive people to have the same view of each other, say the same thing about each other and attribute the same kind of motives to each other.\textsuperscript{61} Because of this, people develop fixed image of each other that spoils the prospect of any solution.

Besides stereotypic view of opposite party, the blind belief of oneself being right, reasonable and trustworthy cause a stand off situation making it difficult to bring the parties loser. Therefore, however difficult, it is necessary to point out the mistakes and wrongs of both the parties in definite but polite terms and disallow them to fortify their stand on wrong belief of self-righteousness. A change of perception is essential here to solve the issue peacefully. A joint attempt by the buffer groups or facilitators with the help of leading local personalities from both sides, to thwart stereotypic and self-image would be fruitful in this connection.

Another perceptional flaw is about the conflict itself. Conflict is viewed as a clash between two, opponents the outcome of which is victory to one and defeat to another. It is an attempt to punish the other for the wrong. Such mentality of the parties divert the focus of conflict from original object to the 'enemy' also turns the attitude vindictive. Overpowering the other, becomes the immediate objective and parties resort to every possible means and thereby proliferate conflict.

Indeed conflict is only a means to solve incompatibility. This can, be done without liquidating the other, party or harming it. In fact help in

\textsuperscript{61} Burton, John W., World Society, op. cit., p. 75.
attempts are highly effects. As Gandhi attempt to harm the other party does not the realization of the objectives because such attempts are highly counterproductive and engender much side effects. As Gandhi reiterated, violence begets violence and therefore unproductive. A change in the perception would limit the conflict to the issue and enable the parties to look at each other not as enemies. This further facilitates conciliation. Realistic conflicts based on definite issues "may be settled through re-perception or re-conceptualization of options and relationship between options and their outcomes or by perceiving new outcome of existing interaction pattern.62

In a situation of frustration, the objective of a party is to remove the frustration. The opponent who is responsible for the frustration is only an activator of the frustration, and is not the frustration itself. "The wrong and the wrong doer are not one." In a situation of exploitation, the exploitation is the frustration and the exploiter is only an activator of that frustration. He is not the frustration itself. So removing the frustration and removing the frustrator is not the same thing. Combining them seldom help the pretty – As exploitation and exploiter are not one and the same, punishing the exploiter is certainly a wrong way of approaching the goal. So, it is necessary to get the eight perception of the objective. The appearance of conflict between two parties implies that the existing relationship between them is not satisfactory. So conflict is an attempt to readjust the existing relationship. The relationship between the exploiter and the exploited is asymmetrical. While the exploiter enjoys the relationship pattern, the exploited is dissatisfied. The latter is at a disadvantage over the relationship, and

therefore wants to readjust the relationship to his/her satisfaction. That is
the conflict.

Solution to exploitation can be found through withdrawing oneself from the situation or by withdrawing co-operation to the exploiter. The former is emigration and the latter non-co-operation. Both of them connate a breaking up of relation rather than readjustment. While emigration is a denial of one's own right to habitation, a cowardly act, non-co-operation is incomplete process of readjustment. This important initiative is only a first step. It removes exploitation but leaves the relationship sore.

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<tr>
<th>Exploited</th>
<th>Act</th>
<th>Exploiter</th>
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<tr>
<td>Non-peace</td>
<td>Co-operation with exploiter</td>
<td>Contentment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relief but troubled</td>
<td>Withdrawal of co-operation</td>
<td>Annoyance and retaliation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Co-existence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peace</td>
<td>Co-operation from exploiter</td>
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Existence of exploiter and the exploited in the same society necessitates apart from the latter’s withdrawal of cooperation to exploitation, restoration of a healthy mutually satisfactory symmetrical relationship. This conversion of asymmetrical relationship into mutually satisfactory symmetrical relationship is not possible through coercion or
intimidation. As Gandhi says, "no man can be purified against, his will."\textsuperscript{63} It may at the best remove exploitation and bring about a state of no-relationship. It is inadequate and undesirable for co-habitants. Symmetrical relationship can be established only through mutual co-operation.

\textit{Co-operation}

John Burton argues that all social conflicts emerge from the scarcity of resources.\textsuperscript{64} According to him, resources are of two types: Material resources and Non-material resources. He terms the latter one as 'social goods'. By 'social goods' he means status, dignity, recognition, reverence and all Human Rights. People have differential access to material goods. So scarcity is a reality in relation to this. Where as social goods potentially are never in short supply.\textsuperscript{65}

These two resources, he maintains, are functionally related. This is one reason why scarcity of material resources have been the focus of conflict even in cases in which the actual sources of conflict is social goods. A caste conflict can take the form of a dispute over the right to use public property, say for example, common pond, temple trust, panchayat properties etc. But the real and experienced part of that conflict may be differential treatment in the form of social discrimination and deprivation of social status. Here the actual conflict is over social goods (status and equality) which has been fought on material ground.

\textsuperscript{63} Harijan, 15-01-1933.
\textsuperscript{64} Burton, John W., Deviance, Terrorism and War (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 1979, p. 68.
\textsuperscript{65} Ibid.
Scarcity and the naturally uneven distribution of resources are matters that demand human collective endeavour and exchange relationship. So "scarcity of material resources is by itself a reason not for conflict, but for co-operation."\textsuperscript{66} It necessitates human willingness to work together for a satisfactory sharing of scarce resources. Unfortunately conflict occurs only on this: material requirements and means of distribution. The point is, given the natural dictum that humans as social beings ought to live together which is possible only through willing consideration of others as equals, the problem of sharing scarce resources can be rectified only by means of co-operation. So a re-conceptualization of conflict is essential. The problems that emerge over the sharing of scarce resources are problems not between peoples but against people as a whole. They are matters not for mutual conflict but for co-operation. Such re-conceptualization would solve the contention amicably.

\textit{Introducing Internal Limiting Factors}

Peoples of two different groups living in the same location inspite of their discrepancies, have many things in common, varying from values and interest to "Intrinsic values of relationship between them that neither wishes to destroy." Invoking such over riding common interests with the opposite party may reduce the intensity and scope of conflict and make it easier to resolve.\textsuperscript{67} Timely effort to highlight these factors with facts and figures in a systematic way among the masses would reduce the spirit of hostility. Similarly the cross-cutting multiple commitments in the areas of commerce and industry, education etc. can

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{66} Ibid., p. 102.
\textsuperscript{67} Rummel, R. J., Understanding Conflict and War, Vol. 5, op. cit, p. 242.
\end{flushleft}
be powerful internal deterrents.\textsuperscript{68} Identification of common objectives and super-imposed goals neutralize the spirit of antagonism.\textsuperscript{69} People who are bound up with such commitments and those who feel that communal conflicts spoil their prospects can be asked to raise their voice. Their opinions can be aptly carried throughout the area using mass media. Such measures arrest conflict escalation and compel the parties to bring an end to the conflict.

\textit{Drawing the Boundary}

Drawing the boundary of conflict is essential for two reasons. First, to avoid conflict proliferation (both vertical and horizontal). Second, to avoid missing the track. As conflict has the propensity to fall into violence, if it is not checked it magnifies into great conflict and also proliferates. This would prove to be catastrophic. Therefore, when conflict erupts it is necessary to draw the boundary, specifying the issues, parties and area of conflict. Any attempt to violate the boundary has to be Forthrightly rejected bilaterally or unilaterally. Drawing the boundary helps nailing down the conflict to specific issues. This may help in isolating the issue from the parties. As conflicting parties may have many commonalties, isolated issue could be weighed against the common features, and thus the conflict potentiality of the issues diminished. Drawing boundary helps in this regard.

\textit{Conflict Management}

Mitchell gives a picture on conflict management. The sequence of conflict management technique\textsuperscript{70}:

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{68} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{69} Burton, John W., World Society, op. cit., p. 76.
  \item \textsuperscript{70} Mitchel, C. R., The Structure of International Conflict (Hongkong: Macmillan Press), 1981, p. 256.
\end{itemize}
Mitchel says conflict arises as incompatibility of goals is recognized. It becomes an overt conflict behaviour if it is not checked at the stage of identification. In this understanding, incompatibility can be teemed as incipient conflict when the presence of it comes to the knowledge of the concerned party. It becomes overt conflict when the party take action over it. Incipient and latent conflicts are prevented from becoming violent manifestation through settlement procedures and revolution techniques. He suggests avoidance as a method of managing incipient conflict.

**Identification of Conflict Issue**

As conflict is considered as a clash between truth and Untruth, first of all one has to find out whether there is truth in one's side. If the votary of Truth finds conflict in the surrounding one has to first identify the party in whose cause truth lies and identify her/him self with that party. This is the principal identification of conflict.
Every conflict is based on certain issues. Identification of the exact issues is essential without which a conflict would prove to be goalless or purposeless. In order to identify the issue one has to first understand the nature of conflict. A conflict, may be realistic or non-realistic. Realistic conflict is mostly objective conflict in which the cause may be direct interpersonal/group incompatibility over norms, values, interest or behavioral discrepancies. In any case, the objective conflict is direct and identifiable. Objective conflicts may manifest over the same issue or find a triggering issue for eruption. In the latter case there is a likelihood that the triggering event is falsely identified as the cause of conflict. A thorough analysis would however reveal the actual cause. This misperception is observable in communal conflict. The cause of conflict here, may be the long accumulated enmity or socio/cultural disparity, feelings of discrimination and exploitation etc. It remains as a latent incompatibility awaiting eruption. On a suitable situation they burst out over a relatively petty issue. In Hindu-Muslim clashes, we can find conflict erupts over Muslims accused of slaughtering cows, Hindus accused of taking procession in front of Masjid with bands and drums etc. These are relatively petty issues that by themselves are not potential causes for communal clash. They are only triggering events for the accumulated antagonism. Here, identifying the triggering events as the causes might help mitigate, the overt conflict but not solve the entire conflict. Therefore for a meaningful conduct of conflict, it's essential to differentiate the basic issues from the triggering events and other issues added on the way.

When a group realizes that it is oppressed or exploited it may stage a protest against the oppression. There, is possibility that the oppressor misinterpret the protest as a revolt against the established
custom and a disturbance of social harmony (as in the case of conflict between stratified classes: upper class - lower class conflict). This counter, accusation may well gain ground and shift the focus from the actual problem oppression to the 'disturbance of social harmony.' The likelihood of shift of focus is high especially in riot like conflicts. As riot is generally violent in nature it is easily branded as antisocial and evil. Thus the actual cause of riot is tactfully concealed by the vested interests to their advantage. Taking riot as a problem and initiate a negotiation or mediation to pacify it is a wrong approach and counter-productive. Shift of focus would only increase the problem. Unresolved oppression is a growing frustration to the oppressed that they may venture to strike with more force again. So it is essential to identify what exactly is the problem (cause of conflict) and distinguish it from the immediate cause. Identification of issues is made by means of inquiry and analyses of the information gathered through inquiry. Inquiry, to be fair and complete, has to include both the parties. This would help understand all the issues involved and different perspectives/dimensions of those issues and the parties standing. In this connection, inquiring the neutral third parties in the vicinity and the non-participant neighbours can help to ascertain the issues fairly and precisely. All side inquiry, in addition, create an image of impartiality. It is a positive stroke in the smooth conduct of conflict.

*Fractioning Conflict*

Roger Fisher, who introduced the method that “Fractionating conflict into their smallest components and dealing with them one at a
time reduces the risk of all out conflict."\textsuperscript{71} After drawing the boundary the major issues that is specified within the boundary can be fractured. This can be done in two ways. First the issues involved can be divided into a number of sub-issues and each sub-issue treated as separate from one another. This would consequently reduce the conflict into a dispute over a specific sub-issue. Such reduction of conflict makes the solution easy to arrive at. Another benefit of fractionating the issue in conflict is that a number of sub-issue in conflict would make it easy for bargaining. The gains and losses of various sub-issues can be traded off against each other.\textsuperscript{72} Second, a group conflict can be traced back to its source and down graded into a set of few individuals conflicts. This would help to avoid unnecessary crowding. Treating group conflict or interpersonal tend would decrease the damage it could cause and reduce the conflict into easily manageable realistic interpersonal conflict.

\textit{Costing}

Violent conflict inflict heavy damage upon the parties and the system they are in. Generally people do not calculate the expenditure made upon running the conflict and the value of things damaged. The cost of conflict is not only counted in terms of money. It includes the wastage of natural resources, agricultural and business neglect, diversion of human potential, human suffering, loss of lives and degradation of human values and moral, social image soil etc. Burton formulated this idea of conflict costing. An exercise of joint costing by the parties to

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asses the potential losses and gains of continuing violent conflict would bring them down to seek alternatives. A scrupulous calculations would reveal that the cost is overwhelming to under take the risk of violent conflict. A report of systematic cost analysis of all these factors would definitely thwart the spirit for violent conflict. A calculated projection of cost of conflict can discourage people resort to such conflict.

*Attitudes Towards one Another*

A negative attitude leads to a suspicious hostile attitude and it increases the readiness to exploit the other’s need and to respond negatively to the other’s request. This kind of attitude tends to increase sensitivity to differences and threats, while minimizing the awareness of similarities. It stimulates the sense of complete oppositeness.

While a positive attitude leads to a trusting, friendly attitude and it increases the willingness to respond helpfully to the other’s needs ad requests. It tends to increase sensitivity to similarities and common interests, while minimizing the silence of differences. It stimulates a convergence or conformity of beliefs and values. The positive approach to the elimination of conflicts must be that conflicts are handled at the level of controversies requiring discussions and resolution towards synthesis.

*Modern Values*

Values play a central role in a wide variety of conflicts. Values are very important since these censure the goals and the means adopted.

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Values constitute the conscience of a society. Just as an individual functioning against his conscience soon loses all self respect, in the same way, if the actions do not conform to the recognized values, the individual will lose social recognition and internal and external conflict will start. A sudden reversal of values makes the common man feel insecure in the new world and feeling of security is essential for continued happiness. Ethical values of truth, honesty and sincerity are valid for all times while the competitive environment has created new values of aggressive leadership and self-interest which often go against the basic ethical values. Primarily values evolve from an ancient base slowly changing their content and significance. New values are also formed depending on quantum steps in human or environmental change.

Task Orientation

It leads to a definition of the conflicting interests as a mutual problem to be solved by collaborative effort. It facilitates the recognition of the legitimacy of each others interests and of the necessity of searching for a solution which is responsive to the needs of each side. It tends to limit rather than expand the scope of conflicting interests. It enables the participants to approach the mutually acknowledged problem in a way which utilizes their special talents and enables them to substitute for one another in their joint work so that duplication of effort is reduced. The enhancement of mutual power becomes an objective.

Crisis Intervention Team (Shanti Sena)

When the conflict turns overt and extreme form of expressions such as physical altercation and destruction of property are likely to take place there is urgent need for some affective mechanisms to prevent it.
When tension is high and enmity is at large. Cognitive effort to tie down the parties will be less effective. Physical prevention of the parties falling on each other is the only way to stop calamity.

The literal meaning of Shanti Sena is Peace Brigade. It is a team of local volunteers who are known for their impartiality and devoted service to others. Volunteers of team will physically place themselves between the fighting parties and create a human wall to prevent the parties from clashing with each other.

A situation of inter-group overt physical conflict is potentially charged with conflict energy – anger enmity, aggressiveness, provocation and very less reasoning. The parties are driven to attack each other physically. The appearance of dedicated selfless public servants between the two parties induces a psychic change. Nay attack aimed at the enemy will first fall on these friendly benefactors. That is undesirable. It changes the mood of the conflicting parties and diffuses the violent atmosphere. Once they successfully diffused physical clashes, the volunteers post themselves in places of high tension and places where likely eruption of further clash is suspected.

This sort of physical prevention however, is effective only to the degree it “buys time” for other forms of intervention. They cannot be effective if they are only an adhoc team organised at the time of conflict. In places where conflict is endemic, they are to be a permanent local

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team engaged in constructive programme. They will be exploring all the avenues to eliminate all incompatibilities. They anticipate events and work in advance so as to avoid any calamity.

Communication

Communication is treated as a utilitarian device employed in pursuit of resolution. So, texts will address the relative merits of 'effective' communication in enhancing the resolution process. What these texts fail to do, by and large, is to focus on communication as an essential element of both conflict and its resolution. Communication is an essential ingredient to the prosecution of conflict between people, as much as it is a tool for resolving conflict.

A point of confusion surrounding communication resides in the very understanding of its nature. Imagine two negotiators in a room; one speaks Hebrew, the other Arabic. They speak to one another, but cannot comprehend the meaning that is intended. Some would say that the negotiators are failing to communicate; yet this would be a mistake. Communication indeed takes place, whether the two negotiators share a language or not. They have shared something very fundamental, even if they have not exchanged negotiation proposals: they have exchanged meaning with one another. What has not taken place is 'effective' communication.

Communication plays a vital role in creating group solidarity, identifying the 'in-group' and the 'out-group'. It also serves as the basis of power: the distribution of power is often played out through communication. Even more fundamental than that, however, is the interaction between perception and language. This interaction impacts
upon conflict in ways that may not be obvious to the casual observer. Therefore, communication plays a more subtle role in conflict than might be first appreciated.

Communication is the conduit of conflict, both for carrying out the fight and for gaining new supporters. Communication is also, of course, at the heart of the resolution process; without communication resolution cannot proceed. This last point often generates misunderstanding, however. While resolution requires communication, it is not true that good communication necessarily leads to resolution. In fact, a 'good' conflict is as dependent upon communication as is resolution. Underlying communication is the disposition of the parties; without the right disposition no amount of communication will suffice. Those disposed to resolving a conflict, or possessing the will to resolve, benefit more from and generate better communication than those who are of a competitive disposition.75 Whereas disposition influences the nature of communication, a key role that communication plays in conflict is to help classify the world into camps. An important way in which this is done is through the use of propaganda, which assists parties to galvanize support and carry out the conflict. Ultimately communication is a process through which parties may wield power, be it through propagating particular beliefs about the world or through classifying different parties in different ways.

In addressing these areas a general discussion is undertaken on the nature of communication and its features. Second, communication as a binding force is examined, one that links people, ideas and

institutions together. But although there are ways in which com-
munication binds people together, there are also ways in which it separates them. Quite wrongly, in some comers communication has won the title of saviour from conflict. This is a fallacious view. Therefore, communication as a divisive force, breaking relationships, ideas and institutions apart, is also examined. This last point is important, for many harbour the ill-founded idea that communication is purely a benevolent force. The idea of communication as being necessarily a binding force is fallacious, inasmuch as although communication can bring people together in harmony, it can also rip families, groups or nations asunder. It all depends upon what is communicated and how it is communicated. The racial hatred communicated and propagated by the Nazis in Germany's Third Reich serves as a shining example of just how dangerous and destructive communication can be. Equally, though, in cases where conflict has been effectively resolved communication has also played its role. How to use communication to resolve conflict will be left to other writers. The concern here is to examine how the ubiquitous nature of communication impacts upon all conflicts and all attempts at resolution.

Communication also has a direct impact upon the three necessary and sufficient conditions of conflict resolution. First, the capacity to resolve may be influenced by the ability to coordinate activity among group members, such as the members of a labour bargaining unit or a social group. Coordination is governed by the ability to communicate. Second, while opportunities to resolve may be had, they are often created by communicating with others and informing them and persuading them of the existence of such opportunities. Finally, the
volition to resolve is often created through communication, and is certainly often discovered through communication.

A co-operative process is characterized by open and honest communication of relevant information between the participants. Each should be interested in informing as well as being informed by the other. Lack of communication or misleading communication gives rise to espionage or other techniques which attempt to obtain information about the other that the other is unwilling to communicate. Everyone will be interested in obtaining information about the other and in providing discouraging or misleading information to the other.

As the situation of conflict is very fluid, any attempt to establish communication between the parties has to be very carefully made. Since conflict owes its violent manifestation to communication failure, new attempts have to choose the communication methodology as to avoid any chance of falling back on further failure. Any failure in the communication would deteriorate the situation and make the conflict all the more intricate. Debolah Dorisoff points out that communication in situations has to adopt certain strategies. Any speech or dialogue is to be descriptive, clear, unequivocal, simple and specific to the point. It has to be constructed by carefully chosen words and devoid of semantic obstacles such as slang and stereotypes. The members have to strictly avoid negative criticism, sarcastic comments, hostile joking or contempt expressions) reactions both verbally and non-verbally (gestures).\(^\text{76}\)

In a conflict situation communication has to be established at several spheres: a) Communication with the opponent; b) Communication with the first party; c) Communication with the public.

a) Communication with the opponent: When the parties show their discontentment through ‘change of attitude’ towards the other and express it in their behaviour they begin conflict communication.

Every act of settling conflict between the parties can be called meaningful communication. It ranges from the exchange of knowledge of the incompatibility to settlement procedures such as persuasion and negotiation, bargaining, arbitration and conciliation. Increasing interaction between the parties with a view to create mutual understanding by means of highlighting each other’s positive common feature would sufficiently bring about a congenial environment for settlement.

b) Communication with the first party: This is a process of self-appraisal or self-analysis. Intra-group communication is essential to perceive accurately what’s one’s own stand, how far they are on right path, what are the aspects they differ from the other party, what are the areas of commonalities etc.

c) Communication with the public: Many of the group conflicts owe their existence and escalation to public opinion. Paradoxically it is the public opinion that diminishes the intensity of conflict and prepare for settlement as well. To create appropriate public opinion, public should be protected from local information. In order to avoid damage to the public opinion regular dispatch of accurate information pertain to position of parties and their possible moves etc. is essential. Any spread
of wrong information in the public has to be identified and negated. This is called rumour fighting. The second stage is creating public opinion in support of conflict, to convert the conflict from violence to non-violence, from dispute to dialogue.

Mass Media

The popular mass media image of conflict resolution is an unfortunate one. The use of language and the description of role leads one to make some erroneous assumptions about the nature of conflict handling. For example, the USA is described as playing a mediating role in the Middle East between Israelis and Palestinians. Describing the US role as a mediating one should lead one to conclude that the USA is neutral towards the outcome between the parties. Yet the reality of US foreign policy is such that the USA is not neutral towards the parties. It has a variety of relationships with the Israelis that are very unlike relationships with the Palestinians. Such a state of affairs suggests that the USA is anything but neutral towards the outcome of negotiations between the Israelis and Palestinians.

Rather than playing a mediating role in the Middle East, the USA is playing a coercive one, albeit while trying to maintain a positive public image. The same can be said of the US role in Northern Ireland and other points of conflict in the world. This is not a problem that is exclusive to the USA. Rather, it is in the nature of international relations; no nation can or will be totally neutral in an international negotiation. International mediation cannot be conducted under the auspices of a single nation-state. Rather, international

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Narayan Desai, Towards a Non-Violent Revolution, (Varanasi: S.S. Prakashan), 246
mediation is more likely to occur when conducted by either the United Nations, or a non-governmental organization (NGO), or a coalition of nations.

The mass media tend to accept others' descriptions of their actions rather uncritically. If a party defines itself as a mediator, then the press tends to accept that description. In part this stems from a lack or understanding on the part of the press, and it may also have do with issues of journalist training and ethics. Whatever its cause, however, it has ramifications on how the public understand and discuss conflict handling.

A major source of interest in conflict handling has come from a number of popular texts on the subject of conflict. There are several that are worth mentioning, including Getting to Yes, by Roger Fisher, William Ury and Bruce Paton; Beyond Machiavelli by Roger Fisher, Elizabeth Kopelman and Andrea Kupfer Schneider and Conflicts by Edward De Bono. Each one of these has had commercial success, and each has contributed to the public understanding of conflict handling. Each has also had a negative impact, in that these books have established certain beliefs about the nature of conflict that are not well reflected in the academic literature and do not necessarily reflect the true nature of conflict. These popular texts tend to suffer from the same three criticisms: they trivialize conflict, routinize methods of handling conflict, and undervalue the role that situation and context play in

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78 Fisher, Roger, William Ury and Bruce Paton, Getting To Yes (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books), 1991
80 De Bono, Edward, Conflicts (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books), 1985
There is a tremendous tendency to trivialize conflict in popular texts. Nowhere is this trivialization more obvious than in how these authors consider emotions. People in conflict are often angry, often motivated by extreme emotions such as hate. Yet consider the view of Fisher et al.\textsuperscript{81}: 'In a negotiation, particularly a bitter dispute, feelings may be more important than talk.' In conflict, emotions are as important as, if not always more important than, what the authors refer to as talk. Fisher et al. provide several suggestions in dealing with opponents' emotions, such as 'recognize and understand emotions', 'make emotions explicit and legitimate', 'permit parties to ventilate emotions', and 'avoid reacting to emotional outbursts'. Not only does the language trivialize emotion, but the suggested behaviour does as well. Imagine allowing a victim of the Holocaust to ventilate emotion — the emotional pain caused by the Holocaust is still being ventilated and one suspects it will be for some centuries to come. The emotional pain caused by the death of six million Jews cannot be easily ventilated.\textsuperscript{82}

De Bono's message also trivialized conflict. While he recognizes the role that emotion plays in conflict, he places the responsibility for resolving conflict on one party's shoulders. Essentially, De Bono's point is that if you change the way you think about conflict and resolving conflict, then the outcome you obtain will be different. If only life were that simple — but unfortunately it is not. Changing thought patterns, styles and methods is not easy; societies have built up impressive lists of failed attempts at

\textsuperscript{81} Fisher, Roger, William Ury and Bruce Paton, Getting To Yes, op. cit., p. 29.

\textsuperscript{82} Ibid.
changing thinking. Anti-racist campaigns are, more often than not, failures, for example. 83

Perhaps most worrisome of all is the emphasis on win—win outcomes, or simply agreements that generate mutual gain. While it may be easy as an outsider to invent solutions that provide mutual payoffs to two parties, the parties themselves may not see it that way. What was the mutual gain agreement that would have left apartheid in place? For a black African it is unclear what this would have been. For some conflict there simply is no way to create a mutual gain; one side may have to 'win', while the other 'loses'. The question may be more how to design an agreement that leaves open the possibility for building relationships in the future. Yet to glibly term that if kind of tough situation win–win or even mutual benefit is to make the situation appear trivial.

Take the 'principled negotiation' of Fisher et al. a principled negotiation as one informed by separating people from the problem, focusing on interests rather than positions, designing options for mutual payoff, and emphasizing the use of objective criteria by which to measure the negotiation. It is easy to critique these four principles. It may be impossible to separate the person from the problem because the problem may be the person. Focusing on interests rather than positions is no guarantee that matters will be made any easier; things may get worse when focusing on the underlying interests to the negotiation. Designing options for mutual payoffs may not be practical; even though parties creatively generate options, reality may prevent the

83 De Bono, Edward, Conflicts, op. cit.
implementation of creative solutions.\textsuperscript{84} Finally, objective criteria may not be available, especially if one is dealing with highly subjective matters such as feeling. Given that these four principles may not work, one must ask how they are to be implemented across the range of possible conflicts. They may work in a limited number of situations, but it would be counterproductive to ask parties in conflict to behave in such a routine manner. Instead, it might prove more useful to have parties think critically about their situation and design steps more appropriate to their needs.

Finally, these popular texts tend to undervalue context and situation in conflict. Fisher et al. focus much of their attention on perception and how parties see the conflict.\textsuperscript{85} Although this is admirable, there is an emphasis upon persuasion, in an effort to change views. To put it another way, the authors emphasize focusing on what parties say about their conflict, not in order to understand the conflict situation, but rather as a tool for persuasion. This is unfortunate. For these authors the situation appears unimportant in its detail, but important only to persuade parties out of their conflicts. Barbarity, violence and pestilence, then, become not detail of the conflict, but rather mere points for persuasion. Poverty in Haiti, rather than being the basis for conflict, simply becomes an interesting point for the persuasive negotiator.

In sum, these sorts of approaches, though popular and publicly accessible, do nothing to contribute to an understanding of the dynamics

\textsuperscript{84} Fisher, Roger, William Ury and Bruce Paton, Getting To Yes, op. cit., p. 34.

\textsuperscript{85} Fisher, Roger, Elizabeth Kopelman and Andrea Kupfer Schneider, Beyond Machiavelli, op. cit., pp. 65-70
of conflict. Rather they serve to skew the public debate and discussion over the nature of conflict and how to handle it. Cope and Kalantzis addressing workplace conflict, comment: In the world where large corporate cultures and small teams are supposed to express shared values, win–win conflict resolution strategies are frequently applied. We can get together and resolve our differences, it is supposed, and everyone should come out winners. This, in reality, is a cultural discourse, not a neutral one. This is the discourse of nice guy liberalism, the passive–aggressive discourse of politeness, the patronising discourse of trying to get what you want while trying to tell somebody else that they are getting what they should want. Some people play this discourse better than others. The win–win discourse expresses superficial niceness while papering over differences and creating sublimated frustration. When people differ, the outcomes will almost invariably be asymmetrical, variations on win–lose or degrees of lose–lose. Indeed, agreeing to differ may be the optimal outcome, even the most productive one. The best negotiation will not be forced to end with win–win. Generalized across all conflict contexts, the win–win discourse is not one of genuine conflict resolution, but rather a mechanism for persuading others that they have what they want, without really giving anything away. It is clever, but not very productive towards long-term resolution of conflict.

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86 Cope Bill and Mary Kalantzis, Productive Diversity (Annandale, Australia: Pluto press), 1997, p. 280