

The missing dimension of statecraft



**Six scholars from the
CENTER FOR STRATEGIC &
INTERNATIONAL STUDIES,
Washington, DC,
report on their findings**

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Douglas Johnson,
Executive Director, Center for Strategic
and International Studies.

In the United States, as in many West European countries, we tend to see everything in terms of the economic components. For the most part the spiritual is not acknowledged. The unwillingness to accommodate religious and spiritual factors has led to mistakes in understanding and in foreign policy.

The idea for this study project on the missing dimension of statecraft, goes back about six years. The revolution in Eastern Europe made it patently clear that the kind of East-West confrontation of the past was being supplanted by ethnic hostilities and problems of communal identity, which had been largely suppressed in the past.

Our terms of reference were to examine the positive potential of these religious and spiritual factors in a series of seven case studies spanning a range of different situations and experiences.

* Two are about ending conflict non-violently:

- a) the role of the Catholic Church in the transition from Marcos to the Aquino regime in 1986;
- b) the role of the East German churches in the revolution of 1989.

* Two are about ending conflict that has already become an armed struggle:

- a) The role the Quakers played in attempting to bring the Nigerian civil war to a conclusion in 1970;
- b) the role of the Catholic Church, Moral Re-Armament (MRA), and the Quakers in the transition to independence of Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe.

* One other case is the more complex situation where

there is a conflict within a conflict. I refer to the role of the Conciliation Commission in Nicaragua, largely supported by the Moravian Church, in bringing to a conclusion the hostilities between the Sandinistas and the East Coast Indians.

* Yet another is about preventing conflict. This has to do with the South African situation, the role of the churches there. It remains to be seen whether that conflict will be totally prevented. But one thing that has happened is that the theology of apartheid has been totally delegitimized.

* The final case is about reconciliation in the wake of conflict and that has to do with MRA's role with the French and the Germans following World War II.

One very valuable ingredient in this study has been the multi-disciplinary team of individuals who have banded together out of a common commitment. There is a genuine air of excitement felt by all of us. Eleven of us are here today. Everybody has been working together, contrasting different contexts, looking at these different issues through different sides of the prism. The range of disciplines spans theology, political science, sociology, psychology, military strategy, foreign policy, and religious studies. No single individual would be capable of taking on a task like this and doing it justice.

We wanted to make very clear that the project was not just about religion in the way most people think about religion, the institutional church. When you get institutional about things, then people tend to get territorial and the accompanying turf considerations lead to conflict. Everyone is well aware of the divisive influence of religion in the affairs of mankind. We think there is another side to the coin that has been largely unrecognized.

If you do a literature search, go out into the halls of academe, you will find also nothing said about the case studies of which we are speaking. For the most part the subject is overlooked - one reason being that when you do get religious or spiritually motivated actors into the business of mediating disputes, one of the preconditions is confidentiality. So some time has to pass before it becomes permissible to look at these things.

We struggled very hard with the case selection process - which of the cases would most represent what we were trying to get at. Our hope is to produce a book which can achieve a break-through in the way that the foreign policy communities and the religious communities around the world approach things in the future. Our hope also is to inspire you as lay persons to do what you can to help establish this kind of dialogue.

Let me confess at the outset some of the drawbacks. Seven case studies are not enough. They are only a beginning. It is too small a sample to be able to do a structured analysis of what works and what does not. With one single exception none of the case studies is about failures. That exception is the Nigerian case where the Quaker attempt did not produce a mediated settlement. But it did, we think, contribute to the conciliatory aftermath of that civil war.

Another admitted shortcoming is, try as hard as we could to find examples in other religions, the case studies themselves are largely about the Christian experience. We did not want to be exclusive at all. We looked diligently and we found that in each case, when we thought we had one that might bear fruit, it was either a situation that had happened so long ago that the principals were no longer alive to be interviewed, or it was something that had never achieved closure; that is, some sort of successful outcome.

We felt that was an important test, because if I am trying to persuade you, let's say you are a skeptical foreign service officer, that there is something to this that should inspire you to want to learn about it, I can only do so if I can show that the religious and spiritual factors have played a positive role. It doesn't have to be the central role, but a positive role that contributed to the successful conclusion, advancing social change in a non-violent way.

France and Germany

The first case I would like to discuss is the role of MRA in the wake of World War II. This case is truly a tribute to Mountain House, Caux, and to MRA, because it all happened here. The critical role that MRA played in achieving that reconciliation is essentially undocumented in the extensive academic history of that time. People here know about it, the archives here have information on it, but it is not really in the academic domain.

The author of the case study, Edward Luttwak, who is Jewish, comes from Transylvania and is known as one of the foremost military strategists in the world. I would offer you a quote of his which I think is unquestionably right: 'The rapid Franco-German reconciliation after 1945 is one of the greatest achievements of modern statecraft.'

When he saw this gap in the literature, he became very excited. He made a special trip over here. He has gone through the archives. But he went at it in a way that stressed independent sources that do not rely on MRA records. It is documented through other interviews, the attendance lists of people who came here and verbatim transcripts, but it does not depend on

someone from MRA telling the story. That is important for credibility. If we are going to make a difference with this study, it is going to have to pass the toughest of scrutiny with the realpolitik crowd.

It is very interesting that MRA played this role because the deck was really stacked against anyone being able to do anything. The legacy of strife between France and Germany, the bitterness in the wake of World War II, was almost overwhelming. In fact no one else, except MRA, wanted to have Germans around. A number of meetings took place after World War II, but without German participation. It was Frank Buchman who felt the intense need to include Germans. He had an established network of anti-Nazi Germans, which was a critical ingredient in bringing this about.

The resources which MRA had available to bring to the party were modest, particularly compared to those of the churches. The churches had considerable resources, but, for the most part, they had very diminished credibility in the wake of the war. The stance that the churches took during the war was not that heroic in most instances. So, by default, MRA became the only act in town. But those modest resources were critically placed in the sense of having a neutral meeting ground here at Caux, having that extensive network of contacts on both sides, the spirituality of this place, the amenities – just three square meals a day was very important for some of the people who came from Germany and elsewhere. A critical ingredient was another part of MRA's network that was able to get exit visas for the Germans – all but impossible to do on any other basis.

MRA's approach, of course, is to change situations in the world by changing the individual. It is a matter of trying to develop a spiritual consciousness that induces

different parties to want to actually listen to one another, to try to walk in the other person's moccasins, to attempt to see the problem through their side of the prism.

Suffice it to say that 2,000 French and 3,000 Germans participated in Caux conferences from 1946 to 1950. These included many of the élite from critical industries. Another very important ingredient was the fact that Frank Buchman was instrumental in helping develop a relationship between Konrad Adenauer and Robert Schuman. In 1950, one sees the advent of the Schuman plan, which was really conceived by Jean Monnet. But Schuman put it into play. It was the European Coal and Steel Community, which led to the Common Market, which subsequently led to the European Community and possibly to the unification of Europe in the days ahead. It is a very interesting audit trail, and it goes back to MRA's work after the war. Both Schuman and Adenauer acknowledged the very considerable role played by Frank Buchman in that context.

The principles at play: there is the focus on leadership, with a trickle-down assumption that if you can inculcate moral values in the leadership, then that will carry over to the others beneath. There is the brokering in of outsiders, bringing in people who have suffered through comparable experiences, and who may therefore offer relevant insights - the identification which earns one the right to be heard. Then there is the public outreach, which is also very important, newspaper ads, meetings, and what have you, setting the context.

The Philippines

The next case is the Philippines. In 1972 President Marcos imposed martial law in order to neutralize the

reformist opposition. In the 1980's his base eroded as corruption began to devastate the economy, and the middle class began to suffer. Poverty increased, and the communists did better in that context. The disparity in wealth and human rights caused Cardinal Sin of the Catholic church to voice objection. Indeed it led to a pastoral letter in 1986 indicating that the Marcos régime had lost the moral legitimacy to govern.

There were several factors which led to the church's involvement in the revolution, the transition from the Marcos to the Aquino régime. One was the assassination of Benito Aquino in 1983. That led to the church and the business community allying against Marcos. Second was Vatican II, which had expanded the concept of sin from that of the individual to institutions; and the third was the concept that flowed in conjunction with Vatican II, that of liberation theology. There was this expressed preferential option for the poor. Again, this expanded sin beyond an individual and got to the structures of society.

Cardinal Sin was pushed into action in 1986 by a group of Jesuit priests when, during the revolution, he appealed to the masses to come 'let us surround our idealist friends'. That led to all the pictures that you remember of the people surrounding the tanks - helpless before the tanks but all-powerful in the total context. Cardinal Sin had a credibility, authority and a legitimacy that enabled him to step into the void and facilitate bloodless revolution.

The principles involved: the Christology of the masses, the fact that the people were Catholic, made them receptive to Cardinal Sin's message. Also, the fact that the Catholic church in this situation could not be a mediator because there was no acceptable other side. The church became the other side. A very important

consideration, though, is that when you do step in to intervene, you should at the same time have a strategy for stepping back out, lest the political institutions needed for the future are not able to mature.

The potential role of the institutional church is threefold. One is to provide the space for political expression. Often the church is the only place where people can gather to think and plan in those terms. Second, is that it can empower people to action. Often it helps them overcome their fear, their intimidation from the authorities. And finally, and most importantly, is its strategic commitment to non-violence. And that strategic commitment to non-violence, as Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King and others have demonstrated time and again, is terribly corrosive to violence-prone régimes.

The Independence of Zimbabwe

Final case: Zimbabwe. The Rhodesian situation was a result of African nationalism. The early sixties saw independence movements through Africa. Two liberation movements formed in what was then Rhodesia. Then followed thirteen years of warfare. Some twenty different peace initiatives were attempted between 1966-78, all of them failures. Finally, in 1979 there was a breakthrough at Lancaster House in London when the Thatcher government prevailed on the two sides to come together to meet for six weeks. That led to a cease-fire, a transitional government, and a new constitution. This then led to independently monitored elections some two months later.

Robert Mugabe won, and there were statements of reconciliation from both sides. There was extensive religious influence throughout the process. The

Catholic church, which had been an upholder of the status quo for many years, formed a Catholic Commission on Justice and Peace in 1972, which opposed the government. By 1978 it was pushing for negotiations.

The Quaker involvement took place from 1972-80. They, too, were pushing for negotiations. MRA's involvement was from 1975-80, also pushing for negotiations. All were pushing to support Track I, traditional, diplomacy.

The Catholic church had the longest and most complex of the involvements. It went back to the Jesuits, who were amongst the first white settlers in the early eighteenth century. They claimed the allegiance of about ten per cent of the population. The church's principal role was that of truth telling. It was only after extensive suffering that it became very active in pushing for negotiations.

The church largely functioned as a pressure group, and not a mediator, but it seems to have been an effective one. They were able to involve the Pope, and he put a lot of pressure on different authorities, particularly the British. That was very helpful in leading to that Lancaster House agreement.

MRA had been very active in the fifties and then had tapered off in the sixties and seventies. Finally, Alec Smith, who was the son of Ian Smith, the Prime Minister of Rhodesia, became very involved with MRA; and that helped generate an MRA conference in 1975 in Harare. A Cabinet of Conscience was formed, comprised of a number of individuals, not necessarily politically balanced, but people who were committed to trying to help make a difference. This, in turn, led directly to the meeting that took place at the last minute, between Mugabe and Smith, which resulted in reconciliation.

It cut through the fact that Smith had been demonizing Mugabe in his statements, but, also, equally important was the other side's response in kind. Ian Smith was number one on a death list that Mugabe and his guerilla group had published some time earlier. So on both sides it was very difficult. But there is strong reason to believe that this meeting was instrumental in helping to forestall a white coup that was planned when Mugabe took over that would have led to countless deaths.

The Quakers were the most strategically involved in the negotiations. Their agenda was very straightforward: establishing human solidarity. Compassion equals access. They had a number of teams involved over the years and a very activist posture in getting the parties to function more humanely and ethically. They engaged in what is called 'balancing partiality' as opposed to a strict neutrality. They were actually trying to help move things towards a position of integrity and fairness.

Principles: first, it is important to note that after Vatican II, the Catholic church felt it had this new mandate. They have an extensive global structure to help them push things forward even when they are in a minority position. Second, religious organizations can cut through the lethargy of blind nationalisms where you have a ruling élite that is keeping the people indifferent to injustice. When providing a cosmic umbrella for an unjust régime, the church must share the blame. You see instances where churches are going along maintaining the status quo; and then when individuals within the church start to speak up, they get beaten down.

Contrasting the three, MRA focused on individual and attitudinal change; the Catholics focused on

structural change, and the Quakers focused on perceptions and processes. For religious peacemakers there is a recognition that one's ability to contribute towards making such a process successful is inversely proportional to the degree that one seeks to advance one's own interest. Therefore, one actively seeks no credit and a low profile, a self-effacement that in the end glorifies the process. This is the way to earn trust between the parties.

Not only are the Quakers not concerned about success, they feel that peacemaking is a calling, and a calling inherently much more sustaining than ambition or any concept of success. They also enjoy a cosmic optimism. This has to do with feeling that there is a divine spark within everyone which, under the right circumstances, can come out. They couple a trust in God with a trust in human beings.

All three groups were given to low key, non-judgmental listening. The scope and quality of that listening sets these organizations apart from all the other attempts that were being made unsuccessfully by political actors. All three supported Track I diplomacy. I told you about the potential role of the institutional church. There is also the potential role of the spiritually-based peacemakers, which has a lot to do with the transformational possibilities. When you reach individuals at the personal level and get them to reach beyond the immediate provocation to focus on first principles – like justice, like fairness – that possibility exists. You see in some of these cases people breaking down with tears of remorse because of what they have been doing.

It is important not to overstate the significance of the spiritual dimension. Its value lies in creating a higher level of trust.

*Hal Saunders,
former Assistant Secretary of State for
Near East and South Asian Affairs,
Washington, DC.*

I would suggest that we are living through a shift in our understanding of how nations relate that should be seen in a 400-year perspective. We are fond of talking about the changes in the world that have taken place because the Cold War is over. We really need to recognize that we are focusing on a fundamental change in how nation states relate. Let me lay out three simple observations.

First: governments today increasingly face problems that no one government by itself can deal with.

Second: people, citizens, are increasingly involved in the conduct of relationships between nations.

Third: the traditional concepts of international relations no longer explain the interdependent world in which we live, and the traditional instruments by which states have dealt with each other no longer reliably produce the results we expect of them.

I claim no originality for these observations. What I do claim is some difference from colleagues in conclusions I draw. For the past 400 years the proposition that explains how nations relate has read something like this: leaders of nation states amass political, economic and military power to pursue their interests against other nation states. That does not describe the world in which I was intensively involved during my career in the United States Government. I learned in dealing with Palestinians, Israelis, Soviets, Chinese and others to formulate how nations relate in a

different way. My formulation is this: relationships between nations are a political process of continuous interaction between whole bodies politic; a political process of interaction between peoples at many levels across permeable borders.

If I focus on the totality of that collection of human interactions, then I must think about change in terms of changing the relationship. I will think less about changing government policy, important as that still is, and I will think more about how one changes a total relationship. Change does not normally begin in government offices. Change is not normally accomplished in a negotiating room. Change begins in the political arena. If the changes in the human arena involving the French and German people who came here to Caux after 1945, if that human relationship had not been changed, there would be no institutions of the European Community today or they would at least have taken longer in coming.

If one is to change relationships between people in the human or political arena, one then needs to understand how human beings interact, the historical grievances, the pain of people. One needs to think, not about negotiating settlement of conflict, but about reconciliation between peoples. Reconciliation for me is God's word, not the government's word.

Also, if one thinks about resolving conflict, one does not necessarily think about how one sits at the negotiating table, or how to mediate a new agreement. One thinks about the kinds of discussions that go on here and in many other places around the world between groups of human beings exploring the roots of conflict between them. One says, 'Forgive me.' One says, 'I trust you.' One says, 'Together we can change this relationship if we can take into the body politic

what we have discovered in this room.'

Transformational event

Therefore, change takes place, not only with the instruments of negotiation and the traditional instruments of statecraft. Change takes place by the use of certain human and political instruments. For me the transformational event in my involvement in the Arab-Israeli peace process was not the hours I spent writing five agreements between the Israelis and Arabs between 1974 and 1975 as a mediator for the United States Government. The transformational event was Anwar Sadat's visit to Jerusalem. He did not take a negotiating position that the Israelis could accept. He took a human message. That message was: 'We in Egypt accept you as people to live in the Middle East.'

It was the human message that the Israelis desperately needed after centuries of pogroms and the years of the holocaust. That was the transforming act in the Egyptian-Israeli relationship. That will not be replicated in many other places. But what can be replicated is the understanding that relationships between peoples are changed by human beings acting on each other.

I have participated in many groups around this house, speaking with Israelis, Palestinians, other Arabs, Russians, Chinese, Americans, people in the Western hemisphere. Small groups – what difference do they make? What difference does it make that people sit down on the patio here and have a good conversation?

First of all, most of us in this room have learned to talk sensitively with each other. That is a relatively new art. When Germans and French came here in 1946, they did not know how to talk with each other. I have

sat in rooms with Israelis and Palestinians who have not known how to talk with each other, who could barely look at each other. In this room people have learned to do that.

Now our challenge is, how do we take the insights that we gain in our relationships in this room into the body politic so that they will change other people? I do not have a ready answer for that. We all need to learn how to take these transforming interactions from the rooms where forgiveness is expressed, where healing takes place, where grievances are honestly explored, and where the obstacles to sound relationships are developed by people sitting and thinking together.

There is no reason why people in these rooms cannot design a political scenario of actions to take back into bodies politic so that those who control organizations can act in the same transforming ways that we act in these rooms. There is no reason why a President of the United States cannot act as a transforming agent. There is no reason in the world, since leaders are human beings, that they cannot act in such a forgiving way, in a loving and caring way, as the people in this room can.

I have sat on panels like this, and I have had less gentle colleagues on many occasions. Some of them have repeatedly told me, 'If the world were full of nice people like you, then what you say would be true. But it is not, and you are wrong.' My answer to them is this, 'I did not come to these conclusions in kindergarten or in the Garden of Eden. I worked for eight years for Henry Kissinger. My colleagues were killed by terrorists. I dealt with Khomeini, Gaddafi, Begin, Arafat. I have lived in this half century with Stalin, Hitler, Pol Pot, Saddam Hussein, Idi Amin. I know there is evil in the world. I have also come to the conviction there is a better way to conduct the affairs of humankind.'

This way is more effective than the old way. The new paradigm shift has room in it for people who think the way the people in this room think. The paradigmship is not an abstract academic exercise. It is an act of beginning transformation by using the kind of power that exists in this room. That is where the power of the future will come from, even though the power that comes from the barrel of a gun will not disappear from this world in the near future. We must learn to use this kind of power to deal with that kind of power. I know it works.

*Stanton Burnett,
former Counselor, United States
Information Agency, Washington, DC.*

I want to take just a minute for some earthy, practical considerations because we are doing our study initially for, and writing a book principally for, a very tough audience, an audience that cannot be asked to have faith in faith, but only faith in analysis and in the historical record.

Our audience, our chief target, is US diplomacy. That is not because we did an analysis and found that it was worse than any other. It is because some of us come from that world. It is also because we admire the men and women who are doing that work for the United States, and believe in their openness for improvement and for considering the ideas we present. But the study became much richer than we anticipated, rich in implications for actors in domestic and international politics and diplomacy around the world. Maybe, in fact, the diplomacy of some of the developing nations

will be less rigid and more open to the ideas that we present than our own diplomacy.

People came to this project with different sets of interests. Some of us were principally interested in the relation between religion and things of the spirit, and politics.

Some of us were principally interested in the failure of US diplomacy to understand and to relate to certain parts of the political culture of other countries. And some of us were principally interested in the effort to get a scholarly grasp on an area that right now has a very poor foundation in scholarship analysis and a poor historical record.

The costs of having this dimension missing from American statecraft were easy for us to find. They were costs in intelligence. There is a far longer record of instances of our failure to understand, than of our failure of power. We found numbers of instances of failure to predict, for example, because this dimension was missed. The conclusion was that Washington has often misunderstood the spiritual factor in conflict and the possibilities for resolving conflict. It goes without saying that this failure to understand led to costs in the world of action. The symbol for us of a failure to understand and to act properly, because of a missing dimension in our statecraft, was a few hundred dead marines in Lebanon.

Why is this missing dimension missing?

One cause is habit and ideology. We found a profound and dogmatic secularism in US diplomacy. We also found, enemies though we may be of Marx, that we were very much influenced by a materialistic determinism which strongly affected our view of the world. The path to arrive at this state was not hard to find. It wound from Machiavelli through the Enlight-

enment, Hobbs, Locke and the people who were most important to our own founders, and up through those scholars who provided the framework for our own scholarship on international relations, beginning with Max Weber and going on to Hans Morgenthau and others.

Another cause of the missing dimension was our expectations for the future. American diplomats in general presumed that when they dealt with chaps in business suits carrying attaché cases who were absolutely secular in their outlook in life, they were dealing with the future leaders of the countries with whom we were dealing. We found in Iran and other places that in fact the future wore strange clothes.

There was the element of amateurism in our approach to representation abroad – that is, the appointment of people with slim qualifications or even interest in understanding the totality of the relationship. We found assignment and personnel policies which were deliberately designed to reduce the ability of our diplomats to understand profoundly the societies with which they were dealing, to reach that kind of understanding which would permit the inclusion of these other dimensions in our diplomacy. We were even able to detail the decline in such things as the foreign language capability of American diplomats.

Billiard balls

Finally we found a key cause, the intellectual framework. It is part of the scholarly tradition I mentioned. It comes particularly from the fact that most Americans do their study of international relations using the textbooks and teachers who come from what is called the 'realist' school of scholarship in international

relations. This school teaches that the world is made up of a series of billiard balls looking very much alike, that go in geometric circuits around a table. Those billiard balls are the nation states and few other actors count for much.

The implications of our study for traditional diplomacy are to show what must be done in order to see a society whole, to understand the most salient characteristics of situations. Those salient characteristics are very often things of the spirit. We show that the importance of this will increase with more challenges of a kind that now typifies the post-Cold War period.

In discussing how to bring about change, we went first to the question of the mind-set, to challenge the realist school, to challenge its distinction about facts and values, which puts values outside the range of serious scholarship. We returned to central issues – the issues that people have considered from long before the Enlightenment: what is the best régime, which is the subset of the question of how men and women should live in community, which is a subset of the question of how men and women should live.

If you compare the analysis of the realist school with our case studies, we would have to conclude that none of these case studies actually happened and that the scholars who wrote them were liars. They could not have happened according to this tradition of scholarship in which we grew up, because the actors involved did not, in the end, act simply to maximize their power. They simply could not have behaved that way. The nation state was not always the key actor. The whole realm of scholarship and theory-building that cannot take account of these factors obviously needs expanding, needs a suppleness and an openness, and we have

had the temerity to give some guidelines in that area.

There was some return to the considerations of classical thought. It has limitations, but it had advantages. It dealt with the polis rather than dividing state and society. It considered them together. It did not put values outside the realm of study. It looked at larger questions than current scholarship does. In fact our case studies are one story after another of people finally able to raise their gaze to a loftier plane. Its method is interesting, because it involved a dialogue of people with a narrow part of knowledge coming into a discussion with each other, and together rising to a higher plane of knowledge. It offered important limitation, but it was an interesting place to start to consider how to change the conceptual framework.

Let me summarize what we have found about future statecraft with the three sentences we wrote at the end of our chapter on implications, because they indicate what we think the challenge is. We say, 'If statesmen around the globe are insufficiently broad in their vision and in the people and considerations they are willing to bring to the table, they will be unable to be of much help for most of tomorrow's serious conflicts. Some of them may not be bothered by this failure, because that same narrowness will have prevented them from understanding the true terms of the conflict in the first place. So Candide, as the model of the modern statesman, will in that case gaze uncomprehendingly at the conflagration before which he lies helpless.' We are all trying to keep that from happening.

*Joseph Montville,
Consultant, Foreign Service Institute,
Department of State, Washington, DC.*

My subject is the changing nature of conflict. In many ways conflict hasn't changed at all, in the sense that if you get two human beings together, you have a potential for conflict right away. If you get tribes and nations, identity groups, together, the competition for scarce resources, water, arable land, space, clean air, can generate conflict. Once a history of violence is introduced into conflict, then it begins a cycle that is deeply rooted, that affects peoples', tribes', and nations' sense of security and safety and evokes a very predictable set of group defenses.

But there is one way we can try to understand the changing nature of conflict and that is in terms of the collapse of communism and the great resurgence of ethnic conflict.

The change can probably be traced to the emergence of the new people in the Soviet Union, and the rejection of Stalinism – that is, state terror – and, shortly afterwards, Leninism.

With the collapse of these instruments of state came the rapid collapse of the Soviet system, and the demand of Eastern European countries under that system for freedom of expression and autonomy.

A lid on the simmering pot of ethnic rivalry came off, and these ethnic rivalries, which were very old, based on scores unsettled, wounds incurred, grievances inarticulated, came bubbling to the surface.

Students of ethnicity have come to believe that the most common unit of group identity is the ethnic group. Often the intensity of the feeling of nationalism or

ethnicity is the function of how much suffering or conflict that group has endured during the past and especially how much of a sense of victimhood it feels.

Political psychology teaches us that these wounds – hurts that have been incurred in history, which have been characterized by significant loss of life, or territory, of a sense of confidence in the future – are not forgotten. One can forgive; but forgetting is very, very difficult, especially if there is no action towards reconciliation between the victimizer and the victim, an aggressor state and a victim state.

Then the wounds remain unhealed and the sense of grievance and victimhood gets passed from generation to generation, decade after decade, century after century and, in some cases, millennium after millennium. This becomes the substance which, under other forms of stress or threat, come to the surface in terms of ethnic solidarity, siege mentality, a willingness to fight to the death – those tragic situations where one ethnic group believes that its security can only be guaranteed by harming or destroying another ethnic group.

It is explainable in psychological terms, but it requires a defense that can identify early warning signals of this kind of ethnic antagonism and bring in mechanisms of conflict resolution and peacemaking very early. We are seeing the evolution of a new value system in the West which some have called the emergence of a new global ideology based on human rights values. It has been enshrined in international conventions on human rights.

The Conference on Security and Cooperation of Europe (CSCE) has recently appointed a High Commissioner for ethnic conflict, who is responsible for evoking an early warning system when ethnic conflict begins to threaten; something that could have been

enormously valuable in Yugoslavia had it been in place, but which tragically was not in place in my government or in the other governments in the world. Nor was the UN at the time prepared to recognize and move against these genocidal early warning signals.

There is hope for a movement towards the institutionalization of conflict-resolution mechanisms through the CSCE, through the United Nations, and through the mobilization of regional organizations. If necessary, these can make available resources, in terms of problem solving, peacemaking and mediation, or peace building as well as peace-keeping multilateral forces. There is a recognition, as the twenty-first century arrives, that there is a global collective responsibility for recognizing and understanding the early sign of potentially lethal conflict between tribes and nations.

Slowly, but surely, the governments of the superpowers and the governments in other countries are beginning to recognize a responsibility. It has been very slow in the case of Yugoslavia. It has been outrageous in my opinion that the US government and certain European governments have been so slow in recognizing the collective individual and moral responsibilities in the life of every single Yugoslav who has been under threat. If there is anything good to come out of the Yugoslav situation, it would be the crystallization of the sense of moral commitment of the international community, the need to recognize global rules of human rights and institutionalizing the capacity to solve problems early on so that a sense of community can be established and can be expanded.

*Christa Konrad,
Vice-President for Administration, Center
for Strategic and International Studies.*

I grew up in the Third Reich. When I was eight, my godfather was killed on the Eastern Front. My fantasy then was that I would buy some flowers, I would visit Hitler, I would ask him to stop the war, and he would stop the war. Of course, I couldn't talk to anybody about that as I became an adult. I knew from war experience that I needed to work on an international level. I found the ideal place in the Center for Strategic and International Studies, where I have been for 29 years. When Doug Johnston was about to join the Center and told me about his project on Religion and Conflict Resolution, I was very excited. I knew intuitively that he had grasped something that was essential, and, as the project unfolded, certain things came together. What stood out for me in the project was the importance of the role of the individual – person speaking to person. For instance, that Frank Buchman asked Robert Schuman, 'What would you do to cap your career?' and Robert Schuman answered, 'Bring about Franco-German reconciliation.' That was one man speaking one sentence, into which then, you can argue, all of Europe got involved, and out of which we have today the European Common Market.

I had had an intellectual insight into the role of the individual through my philosophy studies. I focused on Kant and Hegel, and concluded that in the pursuit of the good for its own sake, in Kant's terms, or in the pursuit of the universal, that which will work for everybody, in Hegel's terms, freedom and responsibility become identical. And we become co-creators in the world. A

few years after that I came across a statement in a book called *A Course in Miracles* which said, 'God himself is incomplete without you'. I was so startled because, having been raised Lutheran in Germany, there was still a lot of 'there is no hope for this miserable sinner' in my understanding.

About 48 hours later, however, I realized the truth of the statement. If we all come out of the creative principle, and I am over here somewhere chasing my own tail, then there is no fulfillment, and my consciousness is missing in the larger reality. That recognition shifted my whole way of being. I still say it timidly. I stand in awe of the recognition because it means I have to be responsible for what comes out of my mouth. I have to be responsible in my body language. I have to be responsible for my thinking and my speaking.

I also had to look at the contradictions within myself. My father died in a French prison camp in 1945. When we got the message at the end of 1945, I was very clear in my mind that the expectation would be that I would hate the French. I still know where I stood in the house and decided I would not hate the French, and I would not continue the cycle of hatred and war.

Some years ago I even came to grips with Hitler in a four-step forgiveness process in which we forgive ourselves for what we have done to others; forgive others for what they have done to us; we forgive ourselves for what we have done against ourselves; and we forgive others for what they have done to others. But my complaint about the Germans lingered. It only disappeared four weeks ago. When the holocaust stories came out in 1945, I felt so betrayed that I was clear I could not stay in the country.

When I was 14, a cousin of mine said, 'Christa, we

will wait for you to come out of high school. You will save your money for a couple of years. We will emigrate to America.' That word, America, registered, and I knew that was the future. I moved heaven and earth to make that transition possible.

I left Germany in 1955 and have complained about the Germans more or less ever since, whenever I had an opportunity. It was only at the beginning of this year that something happened whereby I realized that that wound could also heal. So I want to say something about living in the moment. I since read something to the effect that we are always in the presence of God. It is we who take away our consciousness from God. I know that the past is the past, but we have a tendency to carry it forward and make it the future.

I know from my personal experience that if I stay in the moment and stop the chatter in my mind, things can show up which show me the next step, or which open new doors. They can legitimately be called miracles. Some of us had breakfast with a woman from Croatia. She shared with us that she had had a moment of insight into the force of her own hatred which came up suddenly when she saw something happening on television against her own people. She said it was so powerful that she just wanted to kill. I have experienced that feeling, I know that blindness, I know that force. I have realized that we can also give our dark side to God, that it is not something we have to carry around. We can turn it over. It is there, it shapes us, but we don't have to carry it as a burden. There is grace in that moment when we are able to relinquish it.

I have been involved for about eight years in a small organization called The Foundation for Mid-East Communication which has brought Christians, Jews, and Muslims together – in many instances people who

had never spoken to each other and where the hatred was intense. Both Muslims and Jews would say to me, 'But Christa what are you doing there? You have no stake in this?' Well, in a way I had a stake in it out of my Third Reich experience. I also know that every word of healing that we can individually contribute is a contribution to the healing process in the world.

I realize that, as Christians, we can provide that loving space, that sense of safeness within which conflict can be articulated, because we have to live through conflict before we can resolve it. We can't sweep it under the rug. The fears, the anger, and the hatred need to be spoken. But at least we don't have to kill each other in that context. So I would ask you to be conscious of that dimension, drawing on the love of Christ to make that possible.

I would quote my colleague Robert Newman, who says, 'Dream big and without restraint.' I would ask you to speak your dreams and to speak that which makes you joyful, even if the dreams in conventional terms may sound unrealistic. If they don't get spoken, nobody can align themselves with you to make them possible.

David Steele,
Theologian and researcher, Center
for Strategic and International Studies.

My presentation is on the theological understanding of the prophetic and the peace-making roles within the Christian tradition.

There is a tension between justice and reconciliation. The prophetic mentality within the Christian tradition

today is largely influenced by liberation theology which is concerned that justice not be sacrificed in the quest for peace. Conflict is seen as absolutely necessary.

On the other hand, there are those who place emphasis on harmony. Still others will emphasize more of a balance between those two tensions between harmony and justice. The goal then becomes the creation of a new order which is both just and harmonized.

I worked on an East German case which combined these two emphases, where the evangelical church, which came from both Reformed and Lutheran traditions, functioned as both an agent of protest and also a mediator of the conflict that occurred in 1989.

Since the early 1980's the church was involved in two activities which challenged the state. First, they gave sanctuary to independent groups that could only meet on church premises because it was the only safe place to meet within that society. These groups dealt with issues of peace, human rights, environment, and eventually a whole multitude of social issues that confronted society. The membership of those groups was composed of both church people and non-church people.

The second activity was prayer services which began in Leipzig in 1981. The demonstrations of 1989 grew directly out of the prayer activities themselves. People would leave the prayer services within the church, go out on to the streets, and be joined there in protest against the régime by multitudes of people that eventually numbered in the hundreds of thousands.

On the other hand, the conciliation and mediation role was performed primarily by church leadership within the evangelical church of East Germany. Out of

necessity this became a part of the job description of a church superintendent or a bishop. They had to become the 'go-betweens' between the governmental authority and the people. The church leaders mediated between the authorities with whom they had regular contact and the people they represented from the very beginning of the East German state. At the same time they conveyed to the people their sense of the limitations that the state would impose, their impressions regarding how much freedom of action, thought, or expression might be tolerated.

How much dissent would be tolerated was often communicated through intermediaries. In this capacity, they worked out a mode of operations whereby they were not just stoolies of the state, as occurred in some East European countries. In large part this was due to their consternation over how the church had functioned during the Third Reich and their determination that they would not repeat the mistake of acquiescence to the state. The church leadership found itself called upon by both sides, both the communist government and the grass roots dissent and opposition movement, to facilitate discussions between them at the close of 1989. The church was the only institution in society which had engendered enough trust on the part of both the authorities and the people.

To prevent violence

In Leipzig on October 9, a pivotal day when it was thought the Tiananmen Square solution might be imposed by the government, a group of representatives from the opposition, including church leaders both lay and clergy, went to the Stasi, the secret police, with suggestions on how they might prevent violence. They

said to them, we are no longer afraid of you and what you have done to us and to our people. Yet we are also committed to protecting you from violence by the people. They then worked out with the Stasi the ways in which the government and the Stasi could adapt in order to prevent violence, in order to avoid the Tiananmen Square solution.

Another example occurred in the city of Dresden, where there had been days of violent confrontation between police and demonstrators. At the end of about four or five days, two Catholic priests got the demonstrators to sit down on the pavement and begin to list some of their complaints against the system. At the same time that that was taking place, the General Superintendent and Bishop, two church leaders, were meeting with the Lord Mayor of Dresden in order to find a way to stop the violence.

Fortunately, there was communication between the Catholic priests who were on the street with the people and the Protestant church leaders who were meeting with the Mayor. As a result, a formal dialogue process was set up that went on for a number of weeks. The Church Superintendent chaired sessions to which the people from the street were able to select delegates to talk with the Mayor and other representatives of the city government.

Eventually, such a dialogue process became a pattern that was repeated over and over again throughout the whole country. These were called Round Table discussions. In 350 locations, including the national level in Berlin, these Round Tables, chaired almost without exception by clergy, explored the issues of East German life and government during the first three months of 1990. In many cases, these groups assumed the role of parliamentary bodies within their respective

domains. Governmental structures had so broken down by that point that the communist régime was unable to carry out the normal governmental process. It was church-led Round Tables that bridged the gap between the tumultuous events of 1989 and the first free elections of March, 1990.

This is an incredible story of a mass church movement (one with no one outstanding hero) which entered into protest, conciliated between factions, formally mediated the whole government process leading up to the elections in March, 1990.

*The conclusions of the study project will be published in a book, **Religion: the missing dimension of statecraft**, edited by Douglas Johnson and Cynthia Sampson, late 1993. For further information contact: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1800K Street, NW, Suite 400, Washington, DC 20006, USA.*

'I did not come to these conclusions in kindergarten or in the Garden of Eden. I worked for eight years for Henry Kissinger. My colleagues were killed by terrorists. I dealt with Khomeini, Qadhafi, Begin, Arafat. I have lived in this half century with Stalin, Hitler, Pol Pot, Saddam Hussein. I know there is evil in the world. I have also come to the conclusion that there is a better way to conduct the affairs of humankind.'

HAL SAUNDERS,
former US Assistant Secretary of State for
Near East and South Asian Affairs.

One of the current projects of the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, DC, is an enquiry into Religion: the missing dimension of statecraft.

In August, 1992, 11 of the 14 scholars who are associated with the project took part in a session, 'Regions in Crisis', at Mountain House, Caux, the MRA conference center in Switzerland.



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