is doing. But more important is the "fog of foreign policy-making." It is terribly hard to tell what others are up to, to infer their predispositions, and to predict how they will behave. Because of the importance and difficulty of these tasks, decision makers do and must employ shortcuts to rationality, often without being aware of the way they are doing so. But these shortcuts often produce important kinds of systematic errors, many of which increase conflict.

8.

The Malignant (Spiral) Process of Hostile Interaction*

MORTON DEUTSCH

Characteristics of the Malignant Social Process

A number of key elements contribute to the development and perpetuation of a malignant process. They include (1) an anarchic social situation, (2) a win-lose or competitive orientation, (3) inner conflicts (within each of the parties) that express themselves through external conflict, (4) cognitive rigidity, (5) misjudgments and misperceptions, (6) unwitting commitments, (7) self-fulfilling prophecies, (8) vicious escalating spirals, and (9) a gamesmanship orientation which turns the conflict away from issues of what in real life is being won or lost to an abstract conflict over images of power.

Although this discussion centers on the superpowers, my description of the malignant process can, I believe, be applied to the Arab-Israeli conflict and many other protracted, destructive conflicts.

The Anarchic Social Situation

There is a kind of situation which does not allow the possibility of "rational" behavior so long as the conditions for social order

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or mutual trust do not exist. I believe the current security dilemmas facing the superpowers partially result from their being in such a situation.

A characteristic symptom of such “nonrational situations” is that an attempt on the part of an individual or nation to increase its own welfare or security without regard to the security or welfare of others is self-defeating.

Comprehension of the nature of the situation we are in suggests that mutual security rather than national security should be our objective. The basic military axiom for both the East and the West should be that only those military actions that increase the military security of both sides should be taken; military actions that give military superiority to one side or the other should be avoided. The military forces of both sides should be viewed as having the common primary aim of preventing either side from starting a deliberate or accidental war.

The key point we must recognize is that, if military inferiority is dangerous, so is military “superiority”; it is dangerous for either side to feel tempted or frightened into military action. Neither the United States nor the USSR should want its weapons or those of the other side to be vulnerable to a first strike. Similarly, neither side should want the other side to be in a situation where its command, control, and communication systems have become so ineffective that the decision to use nuclear weapons will be in the hands of individual uncontrolled units.

**COMPETITIVE ORIENTATION**

A malignant social process usually begins with a conflict that leads the parties to perceive their differences as the kind that create a situation in which one side will win and the other lose. There will be a tendency, then, for perpetuation and escalation of the conflict. These are some of the characteristics of a competitive conflict process (Deutsch, 1973):

1. The poor communication enhances the possibility of error and misinformation of the sort likely to reinforce preexisting orientations and expectations. Thus, the ability of one party to

notice and respond to shifts away from a win-lose orientation by the other party becomes impaired.

2. The conflict stimulates the view that the solution can be imposed only by one side or the other through superior force, deception, or cleverness. The enhancement of one’s own and the minimization of the other’s power become objectives. The attempt by each party to create or maintain a power difference favorable to its own side tends to expand the scope of the conflict from a focus on the immediate issue to a conflict over the power to impose one’s preference upon the other.

3. The competitive conflict leads to a suspicious, hostile attitude that increases sensitivity to differences and threats while minimizing awareness of similarities. This, in turn, makes the usually accepted norms of conduct and morality less applicable.

I have written extensively (Deutsch, 1973, 1980, 1982) about the diverse conditions leading people to define a situation with a mixture of cooperative and competitive features as a win-lose or competitive situation rather than as a cooperative one. Much of this can be summarized by what I have termed Deutsch’s crude law of social relations: the characteristic processes and effects elicited by any given type of social relation tend also to induce that type of social relation (if introduced into the social relation before its character has been strongly determined).

In terms of competition, my crude hypothesis would indicate that competition induces and is induced by use of tactics of coercion, threat, or deception; attempts to enhance the power differences between oneself and the other; poor communication; minimization of awareness of similarities in values and increased sensitivity to opposed interests; suspicious and hostile attitudes; the importance, rigidity, and size of the issues in conflict; and so on.

In contrast, cooperation induces and is induced by perceived similarity in beliefs and attitudes, readiness to be helpful, openness in communication, trusting and friendly attitudes, sensitivity to common interests and deemphasis of opposed interests, orientation toward enhancing mutual power rather than power differences, and so on.
INNER CONFLICTS

Although competition is a necessary condition for malignant conflict, it is not a sufficient one. Malignant conflict persists because internal needs require the competitive process between the conflicting parties.

There are many kinds of internal needs for which a hostile external relationship can be an outlet:

- It may provide an acceptable excuse for internal problems; the problems can be held out as caused by the adversary or by the need to defend against the adversary.
- It may provide a distraction so internal problems appear less salient.
- It can provide an opportunity to express pent-up hostility arising from internal conflict through combat with the external adversary.
- It may enable one to project disapproved aspects of oneself (which are not consciously recognized) onto the adversary and to attack them through attack on the adversary.
- It may permit important parts of one's self—including attitudes, skills, and defenses developed during conflictual relations in one's formative stages—to be expressed and valued because the relations with the present adversary resemble earlier conflictual relations; and so on.

When an external conflict serves internal needs, it may be difficult to give it up until other means of satisfying these needs are developed. There is little doubt that the conflict between the superpowers has served important internal functions for the ruling establishments in the United States and the Soviet Union.

It seems clear that an external enemy or "devil" has served many useful functions for those in power in both the Soviet Union and the United States. However, there is growing recognition by important elements within each superpower that the increasing dangers and costs of the arms race may begin to dwarf the gains from having a superpower as an external devil.

COGNITIVE RIGIDITY

Malignant conflict is fostered by cognitive rigidity which leads to becoming set in positions because of inability to envisage alternatives. An oversimplified black-and-white view of issues in a dispute contributes to the rigidity. So does the high level of tension that may be generated by an intense conflict. The excessive tension leads to a constriction of thought, impairing capability for conceiving of new alternatives and options. To the extent that parties in a conflict rigidly set themselves in their initial positions, they are unable to explore the range of potentially available solutions, among which might be one which satisfies the interests of both sides. In contrast, cognitive openness and flexibility facilitate a creative search for alternatives that may be mutually satisfying, with the initial, opposed positions evaporating as new, concordant options emerge.

Although the views of knowledgeable American scholars on the Soviet Union may be sophisticated and the same may also be true for Soviet scholars who specialize in American studies, there is little reason to think that this is true of the policymakers of the superpowers. They appear to have developed conceptions of the other power which reflect ideological indoctrinations they were exposed to in their earlier years. They have not traveled to the other superpower, nor have they had informal contacts with counterparts in the other nation. In short, they have had little opportunity to learn that the other does not neatly fit the rigid stereotypes developed in their younger years. This is an important defect in the experience of the leaders of the superpowers and should be remedied through systematic attempts to cultivate such experiences.

MISJUDGMENTS AND Misperceptions

Impoverished communication, hostile attitudes, and oversensitivity to differences—typical effects of competition—lead to distorted views that may intensify and perpetuate conflict; other distortions commonly occur in the course of interaction. Elsewhere (Deutsch, 1962, 1965b), I have described some of the
common sources of misperception in interactional situations. Many of these misperceptions function to transform a conflict into a competitive struggle—even if the conflict did not emerge from a competitive relationship.

Since most people are more strongly motivated to hold a positive view of themselves than to hold such a view of others, a bias toward perceiving one’s own behavior as being the more benevolent and legitimate is not surprising. This is a simple restatement of a well-demonstrated psychological truth, namely, that the evaluation of an act is affected by the evaluation of its source—and the source is part of the context of behavior. Research has shown, for example, that American students are likely to rate more favorably an action of the United States directed toward the Soviet Union than the same action directed by the Soviet Union toward the United States. We are likely to view American espionage activities in the Soviet Union as more benevolent than similar activities by Soviet agents in the United States.

If each side in a conflict tends to perceive its own motives and behavior as the more benevolent and legitimate, it is evident that the conflict will intensify. If A perceives its actions as a benevolent, legitimate way of interfering with actions that B has no right to engage in, A will be surprised by the intensity of B’s hostile response and will have to escalate its counteraction to negate B’s response. But how else is B likely to act if it perceives its own actions as well motivated? And how unlikely is it not to respond to A’s escalation with counterescalation if it is capable of doing so?

There are, of course, other types of processes leading to misperceptions and misjudgments (see Jervis, 1976, for an excellent discussion). In addition to distortions arising from pressures for self-consistency and dissonance reduction (which are discussed below), intensification of conflict may induce stress and tension beyond a moderate optimal level, and this overactivation, in turn, may lead to an impairment of perceptual and cognitive processes in several ways. It may reduce the range of perceived alternatives; it may reduce the time perspective in such a way as to cause a focus on the immediate rather than the overall consequences of the perceived alternatives; it may polarize thought so that percepts will tend to take on a simplistic black or white, for or against, good or evil cast; it may lead to stereotyped responses; it may increase the susceptibility to fear-arousing inciting rumors; it may increase defensiveness; it may increase the pressures for social conformity.

In effect, excessive tension reduces the intellectual resources available for discovering new ways of coping with a problem or new ideas for resolving a conflict. Intensification of conflict is the likely result, as simplistic thinking and polarization of thought push the participants to view their alternatives as being limited to victory or defeat.

There are three basic ways to reduce the misjudgments and misperceptions that typically occur during the course of conflict. They are not mutually exclusive, and if possible all should be used.

One method entails making explicit the assumptions and evidence which underlie one’s perceptions and judgments. Then, one would examine how likely these were to have been influenced by any of the common sources of misperception and misjudgment and how reliable and valid they would be considered by an objective outsider—for example, as in a court of law.

A second method entails bringing in outsiders to see whether their judgments and perceptions of the situation are in agreement or disagreement with one’s own. They may have different vantage points, different sources of information, and more objectivity, which would enable them to recognize errors of judgment and misperceptions developing from enmeshment in the conflict. The outsiders should have the independence to ensure that they are free to form their own views and the stature to be able to communicate them so that they will be heard.

Finally, there are agreements that can be made with one’s adversary to reduce the changes of malignant misjudgment and misperception during conflict. Such agreements could promote continuing informal contacts among international affairs and military specialists on both sides. They could provide for regular feedback of each side’s interpretations of the other’s communications. They could enable each side to present its viewpoints on television and in the mass media of the other side on a
regular basis. They could provide for “role-reversal” enactments, where each side is required to state the position of the other side to the other side’s complete satisfaction before either side advocates its own position (Rapoport, 1960).

Unwitting Commitments

In a malignant social process, the parties not only become overcommitted to rigid positions but also become committed, unwittingly, to the beliefs, defenses, and investments involved in carrying out their conflictual activities. The conflict, then, is maintained and perpetuated by the commitments and investments, given rise to by the malignant conflict process itself. Consider, for example, the belief by leaders of the American government that the Soviet Union would destroy us militarily if it could. This leads to actions such as intensifying military buildup which, in turn, produce an increased psychological commitment to the belief.

Parties to a conflict frequently get committed to perpetuating the conflict by the investments they have made in conducting the conflict. Thus, for example, in explaining his opposition to an American proposal shortly before Pearl Harbor, Prime Minister Tojo said that the demand that Japan withdraw its troops from China was unacceptable (as quoted in Jervis, 1976, p. 398).

We sent a large force of one million men [to China] and it has cost us well over 100,000 dead and wounded, [the grief of] their bereaved families, hardships for four years, and a national expenditure of several tens of billions of yen. We must by all means get satisfactory results from this.

Similarly, there is considerable evidence to suggest that those who have acquired power, profit, prestige, jobs, knowledge, or skills during the course of conflict may feel threatened by the diminution or ending of conflict. Both the Soviet and United States military-industrial complex have developed vested interests in the cold war: it justifies large military budgets, gives them positions of power and prestige, and makes their skills and knowledge useful. They have good reason to be apprehensive about an “outbreak of peace,” which would make them obsolete, deprive them of power and status, and make them lose financially. Under such conditions, it is quite natural to accentuate those perspectives and aspects of reality that justify the continuation of an arms race.

These understandable fears have to be dealt with constructively, or else they may produce defensive adherence to the views that justify a war. I suggest that we must carefully plan to anticipate the psychological difficulties in the transition to a peaceful world; otherwise the resistance to such a transition may be overwhelming.

As a basic strategy to overcome some of these difficulties, I would recommend that we consider a policy of overcompensating those who otherwise might be adversely affected by the change. We want to alter the nature of their psychological investment from one in military pursuits to one in peaceful pursuits.

Self-Fulfilling Prophecies

Merton, in his classic *The Self-fulfilling Prophecy* (1957), has pointed out that distortions are often perpetuated because they may evoke new behavior that makes the originally false conception come true. The specious validity of the self-fulfilling prophecy perpetuates a reign of error. The prophet will cite the actual course of events as proof that he was right from the very beginning.

The dynamics of the self-fulfilling prophecy help to explain individual pathology—for example, the anxious student who, afraid he might fail, worries so much that he cannot study, with the consequence that he does fail. It also contributes to our understanding of social pathology—for example, how prejudice and discrimination against blacks keeps them in a position that seems to justify the prejudice and discrimination.

So, too, in international relations. If the policymakers of East and West believe that war is likely and either side attempts to increase its military security vis-à-vis the other, the other side's
response will justify the initial move. The dynamics of an arms
case has the inherent quality of folie à deux, wherein the self-
fulfilling prophecies mutually reinforce one another. As a result,
both sides are right to think that the other is provocative,
dangerous, and malevolent. Each side, however, is blind to how
its own policies and behavior have contributed to the develop-
ment of the other's hostility. If each superpower could recognize
its own part in maintaining the malignant relations, it could
lead to a reduction of mutual recrimination and an increase in
mutual problem solving.

Vicious Escalating Spirals

In recent years, a number of social psychologists have con-
cerned themselves with understanding the conditions under
which people become entrapped in a self-perpetuating cycle of

Decision makers sometimes face the problem of deciding
whether to persist in a failing, costly course of action; they must
choose between, on the one hand, changing their course of
action so as to cut their losses and, on the other hand, continuing
to invest in the hope of reaching their goal.

Ariel Levi (1981) has developed a model of the factors affecting
decision making when such a dilemma has to be faced. The
model implies that the tendency to escalate commitments after
failure should be greatest when the decision maker (1) evaluates
his or her losses thus far as very negative; (2) considers that
further losses will not make his or her position much worse
than the losses already suffered; and (3) believes that the previous
failures do not reduce the chances of success of an increased
commitment of resources.

From Levi's model, it can be predicted that decision makers
who see themselves as highly accountable to others for their
decisions are likely to be cautious before losses have occurred
but increasingly ready to take risks as losses increase. Also, since
gains or losses are evaluated from a reference point, the greater
the losses are perceived to be from this reference point, the
greater will be the decision maker's tendency to escalate his or

her commitment. In addition, if the decision maker attributes
the previous losses to changeable factors, escalation of com-
mitments is likely.

Levi's model is based, in part, upon Kahneman and Tversky's
(1979) Prospect Theory, which seeks to explain why decision
makers systematically violate the basic tenets of rational, eco-
nomic decision making. One of its basic assumptions is that
people undervalue outcomes that are merely probable in com-
parison with outcomes that are obtainable with certainty. This
"certainty effect" means that a gambler facing the prospect of
a sure loss of a smaller amount if he or she stops now and an
uncertain loss of a larger amount if he or she continues to
gamble is apt to choose to take the risk of increasing his or
her losses.

We are progressively tightening the noose around our necks
out of the increasing fears that each side is creating by its
development of nuclear weapons that have a first-strike capa-
bility. The notion that each side must be prepared to "launch
on warning" is the culmination of the escalating, competitive
"game of strategy" being played by the superpowers in which
each side has initiated moves to improve its strategic position
without adequate recognition of how the other would be forced
to respond and without positive concern for what would happen
to the strategic position of the other.

Gamesmanship

What is so psychologically seductive about nuclear weapons
and hypothetical nuclear war scenarios that strategists and de-
cision makers in both superpowers are drawn to them like
moths to a flame? There are so many dimensions of power—
economic, political, cultural, scientific, sports, educational, and
so on—in which the struggle between the superpowers could
be played out. What is the special fascination to playing the
international power game with nuclear weapons?

I speculate that two key psychological features make the
nuclear game a supergame: it has a tremendous emotional kick
for those with strong power drives, and it is a very tidy, abstract game.

For those with strong power drives, being in a position of nuclear superiority can be seen as a sure way to dominate and control others, while being in a position of nuclear inferiority can be seen as a sure way to be dominated and humiliated by others. In the eyes of those driven by power, nuclear weapons are the purest and most concentrated form of power that exists. As Barnet (1972) has pointed out, the national security managers and our governing class are educated and selected in a way that ensures that many will have strong power drives and a conception of human life that leads them to believe that, unless one controls and dominates, one will be controlled and dominated.

In order to be a competent participant in nuclear war games, one must be "steel-like" and unflinching in resolve not to allow the other side to prevail no matter how catastrophic the consequences. Maccoby (1976) has suggested that the "gamesman" differs from the "jungle fighter." The latter's lust for power is passionate and open, and the domination he seeks is personal and concrete. In contrast, the gamesman's power drive is more depersonalized. His game of power is played coolly, analytically, and with emotional detachment. As Maccoby (1976, p. 100) has indicated:

he is energized to compete not because he wants to build an empire, not for riches, but rather for fame, glory, the exhilaration of running his team and of gaining victories. His main goal is to be known as a winner, and his deepest fear is to be labeled a loser.

Maccoby (1976, pp. 108–9) further describes gamesmen in these terms:

imaginative gamesmen tend to create a new reality, less limiting than normal, everyday reality. Like many adolescents, they seem to crave a more romantic, fast-paced, semifantasy life, and this need puts them in danger of losing touch with reality and of unconsciously lying. The most successful gamesmen keep this need under control and are able to distinguish between the game and reality, but even so, in boring meetings they sometimes imagine that they are really somewhere else—at a briefing for an air-bombing mission, or in a hideout where the detested manager who is speaking is really a Mafia chieftain whom the gamesman will someday rub out. At their worst moments gamesmen are unrealistic, manipulative, and compulsive workaholics. Their hyped-up activity hides doubt about who they are and where they are going. Their ability to escape allows them to avoid unpleasant realities. When they let down, they are faced with feelings that make them feel powerless. The most compulsive players must be "turned on," energized by competitive pressures. Deprived of challenge at work, they are bored and slightly depressed. Life is meaningless outside the game, and they tend to sit around watching TV or drinking too much. But once the game is on, once they feel they are in the Super Bowl or one-on-one against another star, they come to life, think hard, and are cool.

The abstract character of nuclear war scenarios appeals to the talented, imaginative gamesmen, who are the leading strategic analysts in the national security establishments of the United States and the USSR. The game is exciting and competitive, calling for the use of inventive thought, cool, analytic ability, and emotional toughness. It has little of the messiness of war games involving real soldiers, battlefield commanders, rain, mud, and pestilence. It is basically an abstract, impersonal, computerized game, involving nuclear weapons with strategists on each side trying to outsmart the other.

This alluring, involving, imaginative game is played in an abstracted, unreal world in which the real costs of playing (extravagant damage being done to the economic systems of the superpowers and the world) and the real horrors of nuclear war are not faced. There is a continuing need to make these costs and horrors "psychologically real" to the people and decision makers of the superpowers as well as to a continuing necessity to challenge the dubious "hard facts" underlying the "psychological realities" of the strategic gamesmen on both sides.

Let me summarize my presentation so far. I believe the United States and the Soviet Union are entrapped in a malignant social process giving rise to a web of interactions and defensive maneuvers, which, instead of improving their situations, make them
both feel less secure, more vulnerable, more burdened, and a threat to one another and to the world at large. This malignant social process is fostered and maintained by anachronistic competition for world leadership; security dilemmas created for both superpowers by competitive orientations and the lack of a strong world community; cognitive rigidities arising from archaic, oversimplified, black-and-white, mutually antagonistic ideologies; misperceptions, unwitting commitments, self-fulfilling prophecies, and vicious escalating spirals which typically arise during the course of competitive conflict; gamesmanship orientations to security dilemmas which turn a conflict from what in real life is being won or lost to an abstract conflict over images of power in which nuclear missiles become the pawns for enacting the game of power; and by internal problems and conflicts within each of the superpowers that can be managed more easily because of external conflicts.

Reducing the Danger

What can be done to reverse this malignant social process and how can we begin to reduce the dangers resulting from the military gamesmanship and security dilemmas of the superpowers? Let me turn to the latter question first.

I shall outline a number of proposals, none original. They are based upon what I consider to be common sense rather than on specialized knowledge of military affairs or international relations, although I have informed myself as best I could in these areas. These matters are too important to be left to consideration only by specialists.

1. “The truly revolutionary nature of nuclear weapons as instruments of war” (Keeny and Panofsky, 1981/82, p. 287) suggests that the United States and the USSR should quickly come to an agreement banning the first use of nuclear weapons and should, as part of this accord, jointly agree to punitive actions to deter any other nation’s first use of nuclear weapons. Such an agreement between the superpowers should be presented to the United Nations for discussion and ratification.

2. Immediately following the signing of a “no-first-use” agreement, representatives from NATO and the Soviet bloc should meet continuously to seek verifiable agreements which would (a) eliminate all short-range and intermediate-range nuclear missiles including all missiles in Western Europe and all missiles in the Soviet bloc that could not reach the United States; (b) reduce conventional armaments in the Soviet bloc and NATO bloc, particularly those weapons that have little value for defense, and reduce the possibility of surprise attack; (c) create a demilitarized zone in Central Europe which would separate the military forces of the Soviet bloc and NATO by a militarily significant amount of space.

3. The United States and the USSR should each unilaterally and through agreement seek to increase the stability of nuclear deterrence by removing those nuclear weapons from their arsenals that are vulnerable to a first strike; by renouncing use of “launch on warning”; and by a verifiable freeze on further deployment, research, development, and testing of nuclear weapons. After the “freeze,” a verifiable reduction to about 300 strategic weapons on each side should take place.

4. Since the Middle East is so volatile, the United States should seek to become independent of oil supplied from the Middle East as rapidly as possible. The development of alternative sources of energy—shale oil, coal, solar power, geothermal, and so forth—should be fostered by governmental policy. The United States should not be in the position of having to intervene militarily in the Middle East in order to preserve a supply of energy for itself or its allies.

At the same time, the United States would initiate a “graduated reciprocation in tension reduction” (GRIT) process (Osgood, 1962). We would state our determination to end the nuclear arms race and would announce an across-the-board unilateral reduction of, for example, 10 percent of our existing nuclear weapons, inviting the USSR and other nations to verify that so many nuclear weapons in each category were being destroyed. We would request the USSR to reciprocate in a similar fashion.

I believe our superfluity of nuclear weapons is such that we could afford to make several rounds of unilateral cuts, even if
the Soviets did not initially reciprocate, without losing our capacity to retaliate against any nuclear attack so that destruction of the Soviet society would still be assured. Such repeated unilateral initiatives, if sincere in intent and execution, would place the Soviet Union under the strongest pressure to reciprocate. We could replace the arms race with a peace race.

Undoing the Malignant Social Process

Although some of the dangers of living in a MAD nuclear world can be controlled by arms control and disarmament agreements, the reality is that we cannot put the genie back into the bottle; the possibility of making hydrogen bombs, nuclear missiles, and other weapons of mass destruction will continue to exist—forever. This is why we must seek to remove the malignancy from relations between the superpowers and develop sufficiently cooperative relations among all major powers to make a major war unlikely.

How do we undo the malignant social process in which the superpowers are enmeshed? The first step is to heighten everyone’s consciousness of how crazy the process is and to make people aware of both its very real dangers and its enormous economic costs. The people of the United States, the Soviet Union, and the rest of the world should be encouraged to recognize the craziness of the process and to denounce it as unacceptably dangerous and costly to humanity. It is difficult to induce a therapeutic change in a pathological process until the pathology is recognized as such and seen to be unacceptably harmful.

The second step is to focus on the underlying dynamics which foster and maintain the pathology. In my earlier description of the key features of a malignant social process, I sketched out the dynamics in general terms. Here, I want to highlight two features which are central to the pathological relations between the superpowers: the security dilemma and their competitive orientations.

The security dilemma stems from the development of nuclear weapons which have made the world a more uncertain, dan-

gerous, and anxious place and have revolutionized the nature of war. They have outmoded the concepts of “military victory,” “military supremacy,” and “nuclear superiority” as pertinent to the relations between the superpowers and made the anachronistic pursuit of such goals endangering to self as well as to others.

As for competition orientation, it is evident that the superpowers have such an orientation toward their conflicts, and this makes it difficult for them to handle their security dilemma cooperatively and constructively. But, must their conflicts for power and prestige be conducted as “cutthroat” affairs or can “fair rules for competition” be developed? Is it possible to develop a cooperative framework to support adherence to fair rules?

Fair Rules for Competition

A contest is considered to be fair if the conditions and rules are such that no contestant is systematically advantaged or disadvantaged in relation to other contestants. All have equal rights and opportunities, and all are in the same category—that is, more or less matched in characteristics relevant to the contest’s outcome.

We have lived through several close calls. It is time to rely on more than nerve and luck to avert disaster. I suggest that we take the initiative to propose fair rules in the competition for the unaligned countries. As Amitai Etzioni (1962) has pointed out, a set of rules would include such principles as the following:

1. No nonaligned country would be allowed to have military ties with other countries, particularly not with any major power.
2. No foreign troops, bases, or arms would be permitted to remain in or to enter the nonaligned country. Foreign arms would be prohibited to rebels and governments of nonaligned countries alike.
3. United Nations observer forces consisting largely of personnel from nonaligned countries and equipped with the necessary scientific equipment and facilities (flashlights, infrared instruments, helicopters, aerial photographs, lie detectors, etc.)
to check the borders, ports, airfields, roads, railroads, and the like would be deployed at the request of any of the major powers or by the secretary general of the United Nations. Costs would be allocated so as to reduce the incentive to create repeated false alarms.

4. A United Nations research and development staff would be established to keep informed about the development of new observational techniques and equipment.

5. Violations of the arms embargo—once certified as such by an appropriate UN tribunal—would set in motion a cease-and-desist order aimed at the sender of arms or troops and a disarm order aimed at the receiver. Obedience to these orders would be checked by the UN observer force. Lack of compliance would result in sanctions appropriate to the nature of the violation—for example, trade and communications embargo, blockade, sending of armed forces into the nonaligned country.

Suppose such rules could be established: What effects might be expected? Clearly, the revolutionary ferment in Asia, Africa, and Latin America would not disappear, nor would communist governments be unlikely to take power in some countries. These rules would not have prevented Castro from overthrowing Batista in Cuba. However, I suggest that the critical issue is not whether local communists or their sympathizers can achieve power in a given country without external military aid but rather whether, after achieving power, they retain it because of foreign military aid and whether they become a base for military aid to communists in other countries.

I assume that the major technical problems center about the need to reduce the likelihood that the rules can be violated to give any side an insuperable advantage. Without going into this issue in detail, I think it can be seen that any given violation is not likely to have catastrophic consequences for the military security of the superpowers. And even if an underdeveloped country is subverted or taken over as a result of violations, this is hardly likely to be catastrophic. Moreover, violations are hardly likely to be undetected, but are more apt to become evident before they substantially threaten security.

Developing a Cooperative Framework

Acceptance of fair rules for competition means an abandonment of cutthroat rivalry. It implies a change in one's conception of the adversary, from an enemy to a fellow contestant. Then, the conflict changes character. The rules, which limit forms of conflict, bind the contestants together in terms of common interest. However, common interest in the rules is not, by itself, likely to prevail against the debilitating effects of inevitable misunderstandings and disputes associated with any rule system. The tie between the contestants must be strengthened by enhancing their community or cooperative interests.

How can this be done? The key to development of cooperation can be stated very simply. It is the provision of repeated and varied opportunities for mutually beneficial interactions. In relation to the Soviet Union, we have done some of this, but obviously not enough.

Many equate appeasement with cooperation. They seem to feel that the only credible stance toward someone who might have hostile intentions is a self-righteous, belligerent counter-hostility. There is, of course, an alternative stance: one of firmness and friendliness. It is possible to communicate both a firm, unwavering resolve not to allow oneself to be abused, intimidated, or made defenseless and a willingness to get along peacefully and to cooperate for mutual benefit. In other words, willingness to cooperate does not imply willingness to be abused.

"Firmness" in contrast to "belligerence" is not provocative and, thus, while aborting development of vicious spirals, it does not abort development of cooperation. It is, of course, difficult to resist the temptation to respond with belligerence to the belligerent provocations of some communist nations. It requires a good deal of self-confidence to feel no need to demonstrate that one is "man enough" to be tough or that one is not "chicken." It is just this kind of firm, nonbelligerent, self-confident, friendly attitude that appears to be most effective in reforming aggressive delinquents and that our research (Deutsch, 1973) suggests is most effective in inducing cooperation.

Can we adopt such an attitude? Our defensiveness is rather high, suggesting that we do not feel confident of ourselves. Our
defensiveness comes from two sources. First, we have too high a level of aspiration. Throughout most of our history, we have been in the uniquely fortunate position of having had pretty much our own way in foreign affairs. Initially, this was due to our powerful isolated position in the Americas. Since World War II we have been, moreover, the leading world power. We face a loss of status. It seems evident that we cannot remain in our former unique position. We can no longer be isolated from the physical danger of a major war; nor can we remain the only powerful nation. We have to adjust our aspirations to changing realities or suffer constant frustration.

The second root of our national defensiveness is lack of confidence in our ability to maintain ourselves as a thriving, attractive society that can cope effectively with its own internal problems. The fact is that we have not been coping well with economic growth, unemployment, civil rights, the education of our children, the rebuilding of our cities, the care of our aged.

Conflict is more likely to take the form of lively controversy rather than deadly quarrel when the disputants respect themselves as well as each other. The process of reforming another, of inducing an opponent to adhere to fair rules of competition, often requires self-reform. The achievement of a sincere peace will require a sincere, sustained effort by both sides.

References

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**SECTION IV**

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