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PREVENTIVE DIPLOMACY AND
NATIONAL SECURITY:
Incorporating Conflict Prevention and
Conflict Resolution as Elements of
US National Security Policy

A report informed by a workshop
held in the
Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC
18 March 1994

by Gordon Thompson and Paula Gutlove

May 1994

ISBN # 0-945369-21-2
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About the Winston Foundation

The Winston Foundation for World Peace, principally a grant-making institution, has supported work on nuclear arms control and related efforts since 1986. The Foundation now emphasizes conflict prevention and the reconstruction of civil societies, while retaining its long standing interest in nonproliferation of weapons. It now spends \$1.3 million annually in grants in support of these goals. Operating activities of the Foundation include student fellowships, publications, and conferences.

Winston Foundation executive director: John Tirman

About the Institute for Resource and Security Studies

The Institute for Resource and Security Studies (IRSS), founded in 1984, conducts research and public education on international security and the sustainable use of natural resources. Its simultaneous pursuit of these two broad areas reflects a conviction that resource and security issues are intimately related and often require a common approach. Current interests include nuclear and conventional arms control, preventive diplomacy and conflict resolution, the use of information systems to facilitate sustainable development, and the environmental implications of energy technologies, among others.

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Gordon Thompson is executive director of IRSS. Paula Gutlove is executive director of the Balkans Peace Project. This project, which is co-sponsored by IRSS and two centers at Harvard University, promotes the use of conflict resolution processes that can contribute to a sustainable peace in the Balkans.

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1. Introduction

“It is therefore incumbent upon us all to begin to think anew; to realize that many of these conflicts, as now represented in Bosnia and Somalia, cannot be resolved at the point of a gun; to understand that inordinate use, indeed display, of military power can be disruptive, escalatory and self-defeating; and that American interests can best be served by "preventive engagement" through diplomacy, conflict resolution, non-violent alternatives and humanitarian assistance involving both outside and regional interests. Force may be necessary at times, but only when deemed absolutely necessary and utilized judiciously.”¹

Ronald V. Dellums, Chair, US House Armed Services Committee

This report briefly outlines a case for the fuller incorporation of preventive diplomacy into US national security planning and budgeting. In so doing, it explores some opportunities for pursuing this objective, and proposes some near-term actions. Preventive diplomacy is a relatively new and fluid concept that encompasses a variety of measures. In this report, the focus is on measures for conflict prevention and conflict resolution. The report is informed by a workshop that was held in Washington in March 1994, but the participants in that workshop have no responsibility for the views expressed here.²

A tentative definition of preventive diplomacy is provided here, and this was accepted by the participants in the March workshop as a working definition for the purposes of that meeting only. Scholars and practitioners have years of work ahead of them, both in developing and refining the concepts of preventive diplomacy and in testing preventive measures in practical situations.³ None of that work is pre-judged here. Instead, this report addresses the question: How can the evolving discipline of preventive diplomacy be more fully incorporated into national security planning and budgeting?

2. What is Preventive Diplomacy?

At the March 1994 workshop, the authors proposed, *for the purposes of the meeting only*, that preventive diplomacy be defined as any initiative, not including the use of armed force, whose objective is the prevention, management, settlement or resolution of violent or potentially violent conflict.⁴

¹ From: Ronald V. Dellums, "Preventive Engagement: Constructing Peace in a Post-Cold War World", *Harvard International Review*, Volume XVI, Number 1, Fall 1993.

² The workshop was held in the Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC, on 18 March 1994. It was co-sponsored by the Winston Foundation for World Peace and the Institute for Resource and Security Studies.

³ Examples of current efforts to develop and refine the concepts of preventive diplomacy are: (i) a study group co-sponsored by the US Institute of Peace and the Policy Planning Staff of the US Department of State, on "Preventive Diplomacy in the Post-Cold War Period: Challenges and Opportunities for the United States;" and (ii) a working group of the Open Forum (an unofficial, State Department-supported forum for foreign affairs professionals working in the US government), on "Conflict Resolution, Civil Society and Democracy." Many other relevant efforts exist.

This definition could encompass measures of many types and scales. For example, it could encompass the Marshall Plan, which in the years 1948-1952 transferred about 1 percent of the United States' GNP as economic aid to Western Europe.⁵ Expenditure for preventive diplomacy on this scale is not currently being considered in Washington, although some analysts argue that it should be, especially in the case of the former USSR.

Preventive-diplomacy measures that are currently receiving attention include conflict prevention, conflict resolution, the development of civil society, and the promotion of democracy. Measures of this type promote nonviolent interactions that lead to constructive dialogue between adversaries. They help to build relationships, establish collaborative approaches to solving mutual problems, and facilitate productive negotiations.

Interventions to prevent or resolve conflict can be undertaken by governments or by multinational bodies such as the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) or the United Nations. However, experience suggests that successful intervention can also operate through unofficial 'Track Two' diplomacy carried out by politically sophisticated non-governmental organizations.

In all phases of such intervention the assistance of a third party, functioning as a facilitator, mediator or arbitrator, has great value. Training local operators in these third party skills can be a significant part of the process. In the United States and elsewhere, there is a growing body of scholars and practitioners with experience as third parties in a variety of conflict situations around the world. Most of these practitioners are working through non-governmental organizations. Their work has received limited direct support from the US government, and is not formally recognized as an element of the country's national security strategy. Private philanthropy has provided much of the support.

3. Preventive Diplomacy and National Security

In an interdependent world, US national security requires more than the defense of the homeland. It requires a systematic effort to promote the common security of individuals, ethnic groups and nations around the globe. The United States cannot afford, and does not seek, to guarantee universal security through military or other means. Yet, as the situations in Bosnia, Haiti and Somalia graphically illustrate, there will be continuing pressure to provide security assistance in troubled regions.

Preventive diplomacy offers a cost-effective but insufficiently recognized means for providing such assistance. It can be particularly effective in dealing with potentially violent ethnic conflict. As a complement to other measures, preventive diplomacy may ultimately be able to prevent or terminate violent conflict. Thus, preventive diplomacy deserves a more

⁴ Preventive diplomacy is often linked with early warning, a concept that encompasses a set of processes and indicators that signal a need for preventive diplomacy or other intervention. Early warning is beyond the scope of this report.

⁵ Total Marshall Plan aid between April 1948 and January 1952 was \$13 billion in then-year dollars.

fully developed, explicit and detailed place in the national security budget. A number of programs are moving in that direction, but they need to be further developed.

Like preventive diplomacy, national security is a fluid concept. In previous decades, national security has been used as a justification for programs such as building the interstate highway system or exploring space. At present, the national-security budget is primarily a military budget. Many people recognize that non-military measures -- such as preventive diplomacy -- can be cost-effective and deserve a carefully considered role in national security planning and a place in the national security budget. Currently, national-security planning and budgeting does not reflect systematic consideration of non-military measures.

Such a systematic consideration would begin by identifying a range of military and non-military measures and assessing their respective value in addressing likely national-security threats. From this assessment an integrated national-security budget would be developed, reflecting a balanced strategy that seeks to anticipate the various security challenges of coming decades. The budget would evolve through ongoing interactions between the executive branch and Congress, informed by public opinion.

The nature and scale of an integrated national-security budget, the processes by which it would be debated, and the likelihood of its introduction are all matters that deserve further analysis. For illustration, however, let us imagine that the elements of the budget will be as shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Potential Elements of an Integrated
National Security Budget

- armed forces (including R&D and industrial capability)
- intelligence (military and civilian)
- arms control (bilateral and multilateral)
- alliances & regional fora (e.g., NATO, CSCE)
- economic, environmental and humanitarian assistance
- UN peacebuilding/peacemaking/peacekeeping
- preventive diplomacy

Some of these elements will be implemented unilaterally or with allied nations. Other elements (e.g., arms control, preventive diplomacy) may be pursued bilaterally but will often be implemented in a multilateral arena. Most elements will be exclusively pursued at an official level, by an arm of the US government, but preventive diplomacy or economic, environmental and humanitarian assistance differ because they offer a substantial role for non-governmental initiatives.

Despite the lack of either a systematic national-security debate or an integrated national-security budget, the present situation holds promise. All the categories of activity in Table 1 are, to varying degrees, being pursued by or supported by the US government. In the case of

preventive diplomacy, the scale of activity is currently inadequate. Nevertheless, there exists a base of experience from which an adequate national program can be developed.

To call for a national program of preventive diplomacy is not to imply that the government should dominate the field. Indeed, the past success of many non-governmental efforts in preventive diplomacy, and the nature of the field, argue strongly for the continuation of diverse, independent efforts.

When conducted as an official enterprise of the US government, preventive diplomacy might be implemented by civilian personnel or by members of the military (e.g., in a peacekeeping context). Non-governmental organizations might assist such efforts, for example by training government personnel. In addition, non-governmental organizations may independently conduct preventive diplomatic interventions, which might be supported by either private philanthropy or US government funds. Multinational bodies (e.g., the CSCE) may conduct interventions independently, they might cooperate with the US government, or they might cooperate with non-governmental organizations.

4. The Present Role of Preventive Diplomacy

Neither the private sector nor the US government maintain a central database on preventive diplomacy activities. In both sectors, scholars and practitioners are usually aware of each others' work. There are periodic conferences and seminars at which experiences are exchanged, and ad hoc collaborations form around particular interventions. However, it is not currently possible to provide a comprehensive, interdisciplinary overview of the field.

A partial indication of the scale of US government activities is provided in a recent report by the US General Accounting Office on federal agency programs that seek to promote democracy worldwide. Some of the data from that report are shown in Table 2. This table summarizes expenditures on a wide variety of programs, in which one is likely to find activities that could be categorized as preventive diplomacy.⁶

⁶ Some sources of US government support for preventive diplomacy are not covered by Table 2 (e.g., grants and programs of the US Institute of Peace).

Table 2
US Government Expenditures on the
Worldwide Promotion of Democracy⁷

(millions of then-year \$)

Agency	FY91	FY92	FY93
Agency for Int'l Development	182	225	296
Department of Defense	087	042	037
Department of State	133	143	155
Nat'l Endowment for Democracy	025	028	029
US Information Agency	<u>255</u>	<u>298</u>	<u>383</u>
TOTAL	682	736	900

To provide some perspective on the expenditures shown in Table 2, note that \$274 billion of US military spending was authorized for FY93.⁸ Also, in FY93 the State Department contributed about \$1.7 billion to the United Nations and its affiliated agencies, of which \$730 million was for peacekeeping operations.⁹

Providing even a partial summary of recent or ongoing preventive-diplomacy actions is a task beyond the scope of this report. As a very limited example, consider the increasing US involvement in military-to-military contacts. Such contacts have been promoted for many years, for example through the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program.¹⁰ Recently, the scale of effort involved in international contacts has grown (although not necessarily through the IMET program).

To illustrate current efforts, note that the Defense Department's Office of Foreign Civil/Military Affairs oversees two major initiatives to promote democratic control of the

⁷ Data from: US General Accounting Office, *Promoting Democracy: Foreign Affairs and Defense Agencies, Funds and Activities - 1991 to 1993* (Washington, DC: US General Accounting Office, January 1994).

⁸ Congress authorized \$274 billion of military expenditure for FY93, including expenditures by the Department of Defense and the Department of Energy (for nuclear weapons activities). Including supplemental appropriations, a total of \$281 billion was eventually appropriated for military programs in FY93. An alternative calculation, which includes the support of veterans and the military share of interest on the national debt, places total FY93 military spending at \$420 billion. See: Center for Defense Information, *The Defense Monitor*, Volume XXI, Number 4, 1992.

⁹ As of January 1994, UN peacekeeping missions involved about 78,000 personnel, of which about 1,400 were US personnel. The United States pays 30 percent of UN peacekeeping costs and 25 percent of the regular UN budget. In 1993 the US government paid \$590 million in back dues to the UN, now owes \$400 million, and disputes the payment of \$120 million. See: Center for Defense Information, *The Defense Monitor*, Volume XXIII, Number 3, 1994.

¹⁰ The IMET program was established to improve relations between the US and other governments by training potential military leaders. The Department of Defense implements the program, under the supervision of the State Department. In 1991, the program was expanded to include civilian as well as military leaders.

military and respect by the military for human rights in the formerly communist countries of Europe. One initiative is the Joint Military Contact Program for Central and Eastern Europe, run out of the US European Command in Germany, in which military liaison teams work in 11 countries.¹¹ On request from host-country defense ministries and military staffs, and after interagency consultations in the field and in Washington, the teams assist in the reform of armed forces and defense establishments. The second initiative is the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies, located in Garmisch, Germany. Established in June 1993, building on the US Army's former Russian Studies Institute, the new center will teach civil-military relations, defense planning, and related subjects to military officers and civilian officials from central and eastern Europe and the former USSR.

5. An Enhanced Role for Preventive Diplomacy

While preventive diplomacy is being pursued by the US government and by non-governmental organizations, there was considerable agreement at the March 1994 workshop that preventive diplomacy could and should play a larger role. Because of its cost-effectiveness, and its potential to serve national-security objectives when military means are not appropriate, preventive diplomacy deserves to be fully incorporated into the national-security structure. This will have two major implications. First, national-security planners and decision makers will more readily include preventive-diplomacy measures when they are assessing the range of options available to them. Second, funds from the national-security budget will become more readily available for preventive-diplomacy actions by official bodies or non-governmental organizations.

To prepare for this role, scholars and practitioners of preventive diplomacy will need to strengthen the field internally. One requirement will be to articulate a conceptual framework for the various approaches and options that are available within the field. Another requirement will be to develop procedures and standards for quality control and accountability, without inhibiting the creativity and independence of individual practitioners and their institutions. Other needs will emerge.

At the simplest conceptual level, it seems that there are two broad categories of preventive-diplomacy action. The first is capacity building, which refers to actions such as training or research and development in conflict analysis and resolution. The second is application, which refers to actual interventions in current or anticipated conflicts. This includes third-party interventions (both official and unofficial actions to promote dialogue and negotiation). Each category of action can be undertaken by a US government agency, by a multinational body such as the CSCE or the UN, by a non-governmental organization, or by any combination of these.

Clearly, there are many possible institutional arrangements, each with its own set of opportunities and problems. A full analysis of these arrangements is beyond the scope of this report, but a few points seem clear. First, capacity building (e.g., training in conflict

¹¹ The 11 countries include the Baltic nations but none of the other former republics of the USSR, for which similar programs are conducted pursuant to the Nunn-Lugar Amendment.

prevention and resolution) is widely needed in US government agencies, multinational bodies, and non-governmental organizations based in the United States. Second, similar training could be a good investment in nations or communities that have a high probability of conflict. Third, training may carry less political risk than intervention, where the intervening party can be perceived as holding moral or practical liability for an outcome. Many participants in the workshop reinforced these points by arguing that training and other forms of capacity building deserve much more public support than they now receive.

The nature of a preventive diplomatic intervention is determined by the characteristics and the stage of the conflict under consideration. At the workshop there was discussion about the nature of conflict, with one participant presenting a chart describing the life cycle of a conflict, in which he postulated roles for different interventions at different stages of conflict. Possible interventions include such activities as peacekeeping, peacemaking and peace-enforcing. Some workshop participants felt that the various possible interventions should be seen as part of a continuous, circular process in which different measures are applied at different times during the life cycle of a conflict.

Preventive-diplomacy capacity building within the US government will presumably occur primarily within the State Department and the Department of Defense. These agencies might draw assistance from elsewhere in the government and from non-governmental organizations. Capacity building within the US non-governmental sector could be supported by public funds in the form of research or training grants from agencies including the US Agency for International Development (AID), the Department of Defense, and the US Institute of Peace (USIP). Outside the United States, capacity building could receive US government support through agencies such as AID, the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) or the US Information Agency (USIA). Continued support from private philanthropy, for non-governmental work both within and outside the United States, would be an important complement to government support.

Application of preventive diplomacy by an arm of the US government will be an expression of national policy and will be subject to the many considerations that guide actions related to national security. However, interventions by non-governmental organizations are now, and should continue to be, independent. Thus, where a non-governmental organization conducts an intervention and receives any US government funds for doing so, the arrangements should make it clear to everyone that the non-governmental organization is not an instrument of US policy and, conversely, that the US government is not liable for the actions of that organization. This requires care in the funding arrangements, but bodies such as AID, USIA, NED and USIP are experienced in making such arrangements. This experience could serve the Department of Defense were it to fund non-governmental activities.

At present, the Department of Defense does not provide any support for preventive diplomacy activities by non-governmental organizations, either for capacity building or application. AID, USIA, NED and USIP do provide such support, both to US-based and foreign non-governmental organizations. On foreign soil, AID and NED typically work through intermediaries, while USIA interacts directly through its foreign service corps. For much of its work in this area, AID favors the placing of 'umbrella' contracts with non-

governmental organizations that, in turn, give grants or contracts to other organizations. This reduces the administrative burden on AID, and reduces the agency's direct responsibility for the outcomes of its grants.

6. Promoting Preventive Diplomacy

Participants in the March 1994 workshop generally agreed that a traditional view of national security -- namely, that military force is the main instrument of national security -- prevails in Washington. In the current political climate, discussions about promoting peace by non-violent means are often seen as idealistic or naive. Even the term 'peacekeeping' usually implies the deployment of troops. Thus, some participants urged that preventive diplomacy be promoted on the grounds of its cost-effectiveness as a national security measure rather than because it may contribute to peace and well being. Not everyone agreed. One participant drew attention to the peace-oriented language of the NATO Treaty and predicted that the pursuit of peace would soon become a mainstream activity in Washington.¹² Another participant pointed out that the Clinton Administration has renamed the Foreign Assistance Act; it is now the Peace, Prosperity and Democracy Act.

Notwithstanding the potential political appeal of peace, participants agreed that preventive diplomacy should, wherever possible, be incorporated into the national-security structure through incremental modification of existing arrangements. For example, some participants saw the George C. Marshall center in Garmisch as a promising vehicle for pursuing preventive diplomacy. It was pointed out that some branches of the Defense Department have flexibility to conduct small-scale initiatives, potentially including the placing of grants or contracts with non-governmental organizations.

Involvement of the US military in preventive diplomacy deserves encouragement, but it is important that this involvement be carefully planned and coordinated with civilian agencies. Such coordination is evident for the Joint Military Contact Program in Europe, but has not always occurred. In illustration, the General Accounting Office has found deficiencies in the Department of Defense's Humanitarian and Civic Assistance program.¹³ That program involves activities such as the construction of schools and roads in developing nations. These activities could be categorized as preventive diplomacy, although some might prefer the term 'functional diplomacy'.

One route to engaging US military personnel in preventive diplomacy would be to encourage studies and seminars within the military colleges. Also, training of military personnel in preventive diplomacy, perhaps in the context of training in peacemaking and peacekeeping, would both be valuable in itself and a low-profile way of promoting preventive diplomacy

¹² Article 1 of the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 states: "The Parties undertake, as set forth in the Charter of the United Nations, to settle any international dispute in which they may be involved by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security and justice are not endangered, and to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force in any manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations."

¹³ US General Accounting Office, *Department of Defense: Changes Needed to the Humanitarian and Civic Assistance Program* (Washington, DC: General Accounting Office, November 1993).

within the national security structure. Some of the people undergoing training might be observers at preventive diplomacy interventions. Military-to-military contacts, if appropriately designed, offer another channel for pursuing and promoting preventive diplomacy.

Workshop participants generally agreed that there is a strong need for the systematic cataloguing of preventive diplomacy activities conducted by the US government and by US non-governmental organizations. This need not imply the creation of a single, central database. Indeed, there might be advantages in the existence of several databases. Some workshop participants felt that the cataloguing effort should encompass preventive diplomacy activities worldwide. Many people saw a need for an evaluative component to the catalogue, so that its users can determine which interventions have succeeded, which have not, and why. It was recognized, however, that there are no generally agreed criteria for evaluating preventive diplomacy. Such criteria are becoming increasingly necessary.

Cataloguing the field will require the development of an agreed-upon taxonomy, both for the interventions and their outcomes. Such a taxonomy would categorize interventions according to their objectives, methods, scope, and interrelationships (e.g., how intervention mechanisms relate to each other). It would also categorize the outcomes of interventions. Consensus on this taxonomy will not be achieved easily. A collaborative process involving the major groups of practitioners and scholars will be needed.

To accompany a cataloguing effort, several participants recommended the initiation of a 'needs assessment' effort. This effort would involve studies that are informed by ongoing field experience and the perspectives of government agencies and non-governmental organizations that deal with troubled regions. The studies would identify situations that could benefit from preventive diplomacy, assess options for applying preventive diplomacy in those situations, and estimate the resources needed to implement promising options.

The promotion of preventive diplomacy will require outreach to a variety of constituencies including the public at large, the media, national security analysts, government officials, and members of Congress and their staff. Cataloguing and needs assessment efforts would supply material for this outreach, but this material would need to be appropriately packaged. Congressional briefings, both for members and their staff, may be a particularly useful outreach vehicle.

Cataloguing, needs assessment, and outreach activities are all pursuits that could be effectively conducted by non-governmental organizations. Their work on cataloguing and needs assessment could receive public support. Private philanthropy would be the appropriate source of support for outreach activities.

7. Potential Near-Term Actions

Near-term actions that can serve the needs and objectives identified in this report include:

- additional meetings to build on the March 1994 workshop
- initiation of a cataloguing effort, with particular attention to the development of a taxonomy for interventions and their outcomes
- initiation of a needs-assessment process
- identification of options for increased support of preventive-diplomacy capacity building and application in the budgets for FY95 and beyond (training within the military colleges may be a promising option)
- initiation of an outreach effort in the Congress (briefing materials, briefing meetings, and letters from sympathetic members to their colleagues are promising options)

Appendix:
Attendees at a March 1994 Workshop

The following people participated in a workshop that was held in the Rayburn House Office Building on 18 March 1994. None of these people, other than the authors of this report, have any responsibility for statements made in the report. Organizations are shown for identification purposes only.

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