

An Essay:

CONTINGENCY PLANNING AND THE QUEST FOR JUST PEACE

Just Peace is a goal that virtually all citizens would support as a goal government should strive to achieve, and yet, it is the idea of “just war” or retributive justice that most often dominates the debate. Why? Because the work of “just peace” requires unfailing dedication in following the principles of just peace even in the face of perceived failure – a difficult task that doesn’t win too many votes. When one considers how policy is made, this should not be a surprise. But with the destructive power of modern technology having achieved here-to-fore unimagined levels, it is time to seriously consider the duty of government to invest in achieving Just Peace whenever possible, and how that goal is to be achieved. A modification in the way contingency planning is performed is a means to this end.

How Contingency Plans are Developed:

Contingency planning is designed to leverage power by integrating applicable capabilities in order to apply the strategic principles and achieve the desired outcomes that have been set out by the policy makers. It uses functional area experts, subject matter experts, researchers and analysts, and operations personnel as an integrated team to analyze a particular problem and seek solutions and/or solution-sets to resolve the problem or its various parts. Contingency planning provides the critical decision makers alternative courses of action that may be taken to achieve the desired outcome.

This author believes that “principled power”¹ (e.g., consultation, negotiation, aid with few conditions, consensus) is rarely considered in the analysis, the assessment, or the recommendations that are made when the U.S. faces problems with other nations. Nurturing the relationships involved or considering the priorities that guide “the other” (i.e., the “enemy”) is not a factor when designing a strategy.

Too often, U.S. policy makers are given only “hard power” (e.g., force, coercion, threats, conditioned aid) options when deciding how to achieve the desired foreign policy outcomes. In other words, policies seem not to take into account the element of risk whereby the value sets of the givers need to be in conversation with the value sets of the receivers of aid – this is a “values-based” approach that respects the other’s context and / or worldview as a starting point of transformation of relationships.

Exploitation of hard power is seemingly quick and immediate, but only if “blow back,” reduced respect for the nation, and other negative consequences are ignored. The motivation for using hard power is nearly always fear, or at least driven by a drive to win at the expense of the Other’s loss. Such win-lose strategies are fear based. Needed is a

¹The conventional naming of power here is “soft” power and after consultation with Professor Leo Sandy of New Hampton, NH, have chosen to use instead the term “Principled” when speaking of power. This indicates the importance that power must be used as the servant of all in a disciplined approach.

greater integration of the two “powers.” Not to do so can result in the even greater risk of the erosion of our value system as a nation.

Consider the Department of Defense. Contingency planning begins by looking at the strategic principles of the nation only through the lens of the various military departments. The courses of action that are formulated are nearly always based on military power only, military power being synonymous with hard power. Such planning identifies targets of high value that need to be “killed” and the requisite military capabilities and operational strategy to be employed to compel an enemy to do the will of the Department (see diagram below).

But there is an alternative. It is possible to develop planning models that rely more on principled power to resolve major conflicts, and to advocate for appropriate policies that lead to lasting peace, without jeopardizing our security in the short term or the long term.

Principles of Just Peace:

Most decisions, including those made by governments, are driven by fear of our humanity and the frailty of our human condition. We easily become trapped in the anger and rage of our past, projecting those emotions into the future, and thus precluding consideration of other, more effective, alternatives. To avoid this trap, our fears and anger must be dealt with in the present so that the future is not made a prisoner of the past. We must have processes in place that lay to rest past misdeeds and violations, but in a context that minimizes future conflict. This is the arena of Just Peacemaking and contingency planning is a tool that can be used to achieve that end.

The principles of Just Peace include:

- A willingness to extend mercy, just as we want mercy extended to us.
- A capacity for humility, because we do not hold all of the answers to all of the questions ... a sign of willingness to bend towards the other.
- A commitment to restore victims and victimizers through appropriate means, including accountability, but without further violence.
- A use of language that is inviting, supportive, and laudatory.
- A willingness to appreciate the suffering of others, especially our enemies, and when necessary, to suffer with them ... acknowledges our own suffering.
- A commitment to view all cultures in concrete, respectful terms, avoiding the abstract and never making caricatures of those who are unlike ourselves.
- An appreciation of our collective histories, seeking to understand the historical context that has collectively formed us.

The principles of Just Peace call for the integration of powers into power. This does not negate or discount the need for the maintenance of law enforcement and / or national security military forces.

Contingency Planning to Achieve Just Peace:

Applying and leveraging principled power is a more cumbersome and involved process than blunt force, but it avoids the negative effects that too often arise from the use of hard power. It is an inclusive process and can be “fall down and get up again” hard work. For this reason, capability analysis, operations, and investment strategies often favor the more expeditious, i.e., hard power, approach to the application of power. But as was demonstrated by the Marshall Plan at the end of World War II when aid was extended to ally and former enemy alike, it is through principled power that positive and long term results are to be had.

A recent example of principled power is the American humanitarian assistance given to Pakistani victims of the Oct. 8, 2005 earthquake that killed 87,000. The U.S. delivered food and supplies to the victims. American soldiers helped rescue victims from remote mountainous villages. Medical care was offered to anyone who showed up at makeshift hospitals set up by the U.S. military. The results? While some thought anti-Americanism in the Muslim world was so deeply embedded it would take a long time to change, polling showed that Pakistani public opinion favorable toward the U.S. grew to higher than at any time since 9/11 in a few short months.

When we resort to hard power its too often due to our own failures to maintain the relationships at the site of the emergency. An example is when former President Clinton sent US military forces into Haiti to manage the violence created by the failing Haitian government. It was one way of accepting the responsibility for our own past failures to pay attention to our neighbors. Even so, strict rules of engagement were devised to ensure the use of force did not exceed pre-identified thresholds.

Justifying the use of hard power should be a cause for reflection. Its use reveals the truth of our own failures to care and heal the long-term relationships with “The other.” Just Peace is driven by the motivation and desire to nurture the relationship between the parties involved and to achieve long-term results not possible though hard power alone.

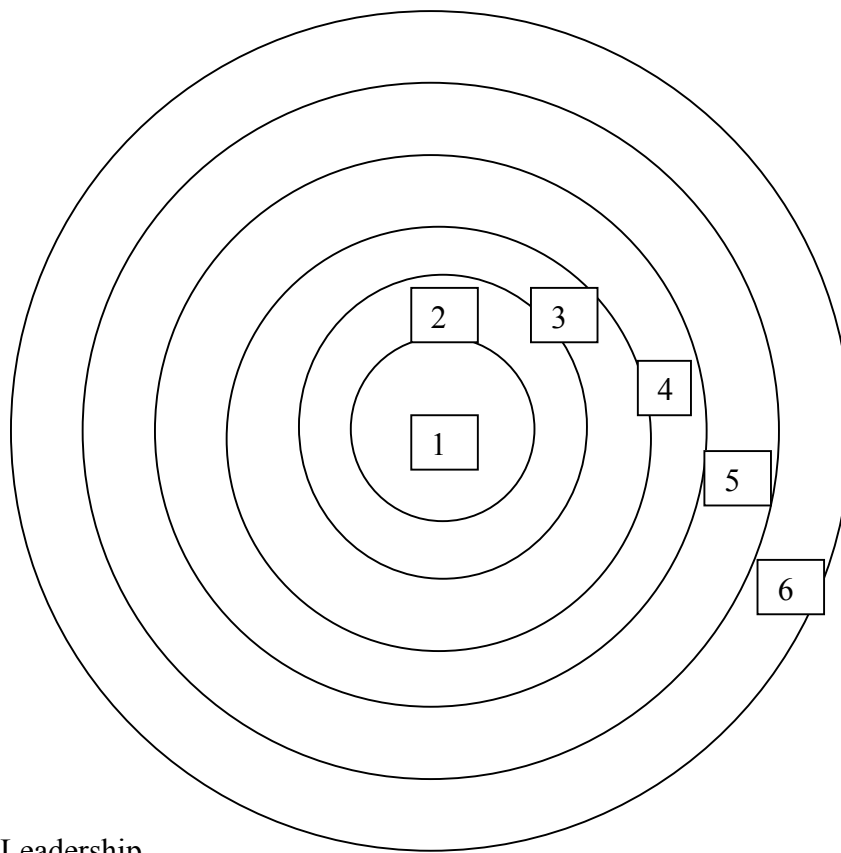
One strategic option using principled power to achieve national priorities is to target impoverished regions in the world and help them develop strong governments that are viewed favorably by the citizens of these nations and the world community. To this end, we must not facilitate the abuse of power by those in control by giving military or any other forms of aid to those who show no interest in peaceful outcomes. We must not look the other way when those in power violate the basic rights of the governed. Our failure to do so, as history has proven time and again, is to facilitate and maintain governments that fail to assure a semblance of security and a modicum of peace.²

² According to William Odom, in *America's Inadvertent Empire*, “there is no reason why some other political power [other than the US] in the world could not lead ...” His assessment targets the use of hard power by our nation identifying that “In too many cases (such policy) has prevented the (desired effects stated such as) civil societies, human rights, effective economic performance, ...” Failure to achieve such effects erode trust such that in the end a nation's power (influence) is depleted resulting in a downward spiraling of the use of even more hard power...

Historically, contingency planning has been short term, usually less than three years. But in order to plan for Just Peace, a longer planning process must be considered. An appropriate integration of hard power to address immediate dangers and emergencies and principled power to resolve conflict and to facilitate reconciliation best serves planning for Just Peace. It also optimizes security requirements now and in the future.

Brief Description of Strategic Rings of a Nation State – Simplified as a Model for Exploring Just Peace: An example of one way to begin exploration for processes.

The diagram below depicts a nominal set of Strategic Rings that model a center of power such as a nation state. It is a point of departure for setting up a contingency plan. The diagram represents an example model of an ancient city state that when viewed three-dimensionally, each ring represents centers of power that make up the operations of the city state (key government leadership, economic systems, supporting infrastructure such as power generating capacity, roads, etc, cultural and religious leadership, population centers and political power, military forces and police). This model was developed by a US Air Force planning-cell to better understand how best to dismantle an enemy's nation-state with minimal collateral damage.



1—Key Leadership
2 – Economic Engines
3 – Key Supporting Infrastructure

5 – Population Centers
6 – First Responders and Military

4 – Cultural and Religious

One example being electrical power; it is not necessary to destroy a nation's power generating capacity when what is needed is to disrupt the power delivery system (power grids and transformer boost stations). This model helped war planners understand the best strategies for employing the newly emerging technological capability of precision attack and needed attack strategies. Such a capability greatly eased the force-on-force requirements of the ground forces in the field because of air power's unique capability to achieve effects by flying over and around the outside protective ring.

The simplistic description used above is to help the reader grasp the transformational potential in the exploitation of war planning as a tool for planning for peace. The established interests must be considered when formulating a contingency plan. To commence the Just Peace process, an assessment of which peace agencies (NGOs, nations and private entities) are supporting each of the above power centers and how are they doing so must be made. One also needs to determine which "war" or military industrial complex interests are supporting each of these power centers and how.

The next step is to consider what motivates the actions of the "enemy." What interests, values, and historical context drive the other side? Only then can various options be formulated and weighed. With this information, the policy makers are able to assess what is the best investment and operations strategy, and how to mix both hard power and principled power, to achieve Just Peace.

Conclusion

If we are to leave the world a better place, we must learn to live in the moments given to us.³ When we are in touch with the truth of who and what we are as humans, then we accept that we live in the moments given to us in relationships with others. These moments can be filled with violence and war, vengeance and retribution. Or we can choose differently. We can choose to fill these moments with the agonizing, but uplifting and inspiring, opportunities that conflict among peoples and among nations presents to reconcile and achieve lasting peace. We must harvest these opportunities by harnessing the tools of contingency planning to the goal of Just Peace.

³ Joan Chittister, in *The Rule of Saint Benedict: Insight for the Ages*, reminds us that we as human beings do not live in the present moment, that *we are trapped in the past, angry at what has formed us, or fixated on the future that is free from pain or totally under our control (page 27)*.