Hartford Seminary
Course Syllabus
Course Title: Conflict Transformation and Peace Building (DI-680)
Course Dates and Times: January 12-16, 2015 9:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.
Instructors: Robert A. Evans, Alice Frazer Evans, Plowshares Institute

“Reconciliation is ultimately a gift from God – but agents of reconciliation can help plow the ground and plant the seeds for this divine gift.”

Course Description and Goals of the Course
This course draws on actual conflict situations and the personal experiences of the instructors in South Africa, Indonesia and the United States to connect an applied theology of reconciliation with basic insights and principles of conflict transformation and peace building across cultures. This course is especially appropriate for theological students and religious and community leaders.

Our goals are to help participants build skills of analysis and constructive conflict intervention to become more effective agents of reconciliation, helping parties in conflict move towards sustainable peace - and become open to receiving God’s gift of reconciliation.

Required Reading:
1. Peace Skills: Manual for Community Mediators (Kraybill, Evans) (available from Amazon and reserve in the Hartford Seminary Library)
2. At least one book from your selected focus: Mediation or Theology of Reconciliation (These books will be on reserve in the Hartford Seminary Library)
3. *Two brief articles: “Worldviews” and “How to Read a ‘Teaching’ Case” (online with Prairie Storm case study)
4. Two case studies: Jakub’s Call and Giving Thanks

NOTE: Read the *two articles and case study *Jakub’s Call prior to first day of course.

“Giving Thanks” will be discussed later in the course.

Course Assignments
1. Read at least two required books. If possible, read the Manual prior to the course.
2. Carefully study assigned case studies for group discussions.
3. Select one of the two following foci: Mediation or Theology of Reconciliation for your writing assignment of 4 to 8 pages. This assignment is due by Friday 13, March 2015.

A. For those who select Mediation as a focus, read at least one additional book, from the following:
   - Peace Skills Leaders’ Guide (Evans, Kraybill)
   - The Promise of Mediation: The Transformative Approach to Conflict (Bush, Folger)
   - Preparing for Peace: Conflict Transformation Across Cultures (Leaderach)
   - The Moral Imagination: The Art and Soul of Building Peace (Lederach)

Writing Assignment
Select one of several suggested cases from: Additional Case Studies for Written Assignments for Mediation (online and hardcopy). (a) Describe the context; analyze the
issues and primary parties; identify stakeholders; cite rationale for potential facilitators or mediator/s; suggest constructive approaches to intervene in the conflict; and suggest possible short- and long-term goals to move forward, including approaches toward resolution and transformation.

(b) Respond to this question: What aspects of Peace Skills and your selected additional reading were most helpful as you facilitated this conflict and why?

B. For those who choose Theology of Reconciliation, read at least one additional book from the following:
   No Future Without Forgiveness (Desmond Tutu)
   The Journey Toward Reconciliation (Lederach)
   The Moral Imagination: The Art and Soul of Building Peace (Lederach)
   The Ministry of Reconciliation: Spirituality & Strategies (Robert J. Schreiter)

Written Assignment
Select one of the case studies provided by the Instructors. Develop a theological commentary including the essence of the selected case and your reflections of your own theology of reconciliation, noting personal insights and the theological resources in Peace Skills and your additional reading. (Examples available)

Course Evaluation will be based on daily participation, classroom preparation, and written assignments.

List of course books in the seminary library
*Required books:


*It is required to read at least ONE additional book from the following list:
No Future Without Forgiveness, Desmond Tutu , 2000
The Ministry of Reconciliation: Spirituality & Strategies (Robert J. Schreiter)
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<th><strong>Course Schedule</strong></th>
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<td>The Power of World Views (assigned article)</td>
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<td>Assumptions about Conflict, Conflict Analysis (using case study “Jakub’s Call” and Background); Listening Skills;</td>
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<td><strong>Tuesday, January 13</strong></td>
<td>Sacred Text Study; Introduction to Stages of Mediation and Practice Skills</td>
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<td>Small Groups (Discuss Writing Assignments), Sacred Text Study on Reconciliation, Focus on Transformation</td>
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Note: The schedule and content will be adjusted for the nature and needs of the class.

**Advance reading for class discussion on Monday, January 12, 2015**

1) “Worldviews” by Walter Wink
2) Problem-Posing Case Studies and How to Study Them
3) Jakub’s Call and Background Information

1. **“Worldviews” by Walter Wink (next page)**
WORLDVIEWS

Our worldviews determine to a large extent what we can believe about life, faith, and the very cosmos. If we are unaware of what worldviews have claimed our allegiance, they will determine our behavior in ways to which we are simply blind. At a far deeper level than ideologies or myths, worldviews tend to dictate what we are able to believe. They are not just the presuppositions by which we think, but the very foundation of thought itself. Consequently, people who have difficulty believing in prayer, or spiritual healing, or the life of the spirit, or God, are, in my experience, suffering far more from a worldview problem than a theological problem.

Worldviews provide a picture of the nature of things: where is heaven, where is earth, what is visible and what is invisible, what is real and what is unreal. As I am using the term “worldviews,” they are not philosophies, theologies, or even myths or tales about the origin of things. We might think of our worldview as the foundation of the house of our minds. On that foundation we erect the walls and roof, which are the myths we live by, the symbolic understandings of our world. The furnishings—the stuff to sit on, lie down on, and eat with—are our theologies and personal philosophies. People notice the sofa and rugs (our theologies), they comment on the structure (the key myths), but few notice the foundation (our worldview). It is covered, hidden from view. In the very act of opposing another person’s thought, we usually share the same worldview.
2. Problem-Posing Case Studies and How to Study Them

There are many types of case studies. Some are brief, one-page descriptions of an encounter between two people. Others contain detailed, often long historical descriptions of a legal or business dilemma. The type of problem-posing case used in this workshop follows a model developed by Harvard Law and Business Schools. These are carefully written descriptions of an actual situation or event. However, the persons and places in this type of case are usually disguised to protect the privacy of those involved in the situation.

The basic information which readers need to understand the situation is provided. Most problem-posing cases are seen through the eyes of one person who must make a critical decision. The case is usually open-ended, and readers are not told what decision was made. Information about the decision is balanced, and there is no obvious or “correct” answer. The work of discussion participants is to “enter” the experience of the decision-maker, analyze the context and events of the situation, and suggest the best options for moving toward resolution. Participants should be able to suggest which data inform their analysis and to offer the reasons behind the alternatives they suggest.

Suggestions for Studying a Case for Group Discussion

A successful case discussion requires careful preparation and open interchanges between participants. The following steps will help you in sharing your insights and points of view.

1. Immerse yourself in the case; get to know the details. If possible, read the case several times.
2. Analyze the case after reading it.
   Write out the cast of characters.
   Develop a chronology of events.
   Identify the basic issues (especially those things—acts, values, and attitudes—about which decisions need to be made).
   Try to see all the positions reasonable persons might take.
3. Mull over the case; that is, think about it casually. Let things flow through your mind.
4. Remember that there is usually no one, right answer.
5. Participate in the discussion.
   Push your ideas; be willing to give reasons.
   Listen to others; evaluate their positions.
   Keep an open mind; be willing to change it upon new insights or evidence.
   Enjoy yourself.

This material comes from Peace Skills Leaders’ Guide (Jossey-Bass, 2001) by Evans, Evans and Kraybill, p. 19
3. **Case Study for Monday, January 12**

Be sure to read and study the case and the background for class discussion.

**Jakub’s Call**

Jakub exclaimed, “*Wah, ekornya panjang!*” as he finished reading a letter from home.

The Indonesian proverb escaping from his lips literally means, “The tail is long.” It refers to the consequences of issues or events that are multi-complex and have long-term impact. Religious leaders back home in Papua were urging Jakub to cut short his study leave in Jakarta and return to mediate a brewing crisis with a “long tail.”

The call to come home was precipitated by the threat of a protest by unemployed tribal people from the area surrounding the mining city of Kuala Kencana. Ironically, the previous day Jakub had received a letter from a village pastor who lived near the city who wrote about some of the same issues but from a different perspective. Jakub felt that his future was on the line—individually and career-wise.

Kuala Kencana was built from the ground up by P.T Freeport Indonesia (PTFI) to service the ever-expanding operation of the largest gold mining operation in the world and the largest foreign taxpayer in Indonesia. PTFI was primarily owned by Freeport-McMoran Copper and Gold, Inc., a USA-based mining company that received its mining concession from the Indonesian government in 1967. The Indonesian government owned approximately 10 percent of the company.

Jakub knew well the success stories of PTFI and the benefits it brought to many of its employees and to the Indonesian government. He also knew the stories that didn’t get circulated in annual reports and those about the victims of cover-up efforts.

In the early stages of the mining development, many of Jakub’s own Amungme people were moved off their tribal land onto the land of the Komoro people. This forced removal of thousands of families freed space for the mining development, but it also created the potential for serious inter-tribal conflict. Neither those who were displaced nor those who lost land to resettled families were compensated by the government. As the operations grew larger, an independent environmental study revealed that PTFI was annually dumping 40 million tons of tailings - the crushed rock and mineral waste left after the
gold has been physically and chemically extracted into the Agabogong River. Tribal people hold the land and the river in sacred trust, and the two rivers in that area represent the breasts of their Mother. The dumping of toxic mine refuse into the river was “killing their Mother.” Further, the run-off from large construction projects for Kuala Kencana had damaging environmental consequences. Over eleven square miles of sago-producing land was now dead to any productive activity. The local people denied company reports that drinking water was not endangered with their own claims of seriously polluted water and rising infant mortality rates.

In the 1980’s the government dramatically accelerated its transmigration program which was designed to reduce overcrowded populations on Java, Bali and Madura and more effectively exploit the natural resources of “outer islands.” This program, which dated from Dutch colonialism and was later embraced by President Suharto, introduced new dynamics into Papua. Large blocks of land were transferred to the government by adat (customary law). Although the transmigrants from outside Papua did not have the right to own or sell the land they moved to, thousands of people moved from other islands to Papua with government support, and many were hired into the mining operation. Those from Java were paid higher wages than those from Jayapura and Biak. The local tribal people hired into the operation were given the most menial jobs at the bottom of the pay scale. Nevertheless, many tribal people who had been displaced from their homes and land-based livelihood moved to the edges of the mine in search of jobs. As tension among workers, non-working tribal people, and the mining company erupted in violent conflicts, five separate military interventions in 1994 and 1995 left some sixty persons dead.

General Gunawan explained the actions of his troops on the basis that his mandate was to defend Indonesia’s central policy of nationhood: one nation, one race, one people. At the time Jakub recalled reading an editorial in a Jakarta newspaper citing the massive amount of taxes PTFI paid to the government and the importance of providing security for the mining operation. The article also noted that many elites, including those in the military, directly benefited from Papuan mining and timber operations.

Jakub knew that the combination of all these developments across the years, and the incidents they produced, were reaching a boiling point that could dwarf the incidents of 94-95. In fact, the Irianese foreman of the mine, Nathaniel, had stated that if the area
agitators did not stop threatening the mine workers, he would again call in the military to protect them. Jakub feared that the fallout from military action could go well beyond issues about the mine, giving the military an excuse to move against resisters as supporters of an independence movement against the government.

The letter sent to Jakub by the local pastor was about one of his parishioners, Darius, a recognized Amungme leader. The pastor feared for his friend who spoke out against the job discrimination of tribal people, was a vocal opponent of the mine pollution, and demanded compensation for the land stolen by the mine. Many of Darius’ followers were threatening to block the miners from getting to work if the mine managers did not meet their demands for jobs and clean water.

A further challenge to Jakub himself was the fact that, within his own religious community, not all the members saw eye-to-eye on how to make a difference in this troubled situation. Members of his church who worked for PTFI and those who did not were at odds with each other. Many with jobs defended the mine, pointing out that the residents of Kuala Kencana now had a school and a medical clinic. These were benefits they would not have without the mine. Others angrily responded that these were poor substitutes for their dignity and the health of their land and rivers. Jakub felt it ironic that Christian and Muslims in the area had a relatively peaceful coexistence, while the potential for intra-Christian conflict was more threatening.

Jakub felt a tremendous weight on his shoulders and in his heart. He was one of the few members of his community to attend university and be recognized in the province for his skills as a teacher and a peacemaker. How could he effectively intervene in this situation when those of his own tribe, his own family, his own community, and his own church were so divided?

The actual names of all persons and places have been disguised to protect the privacy of the persons involved in this situation. The original version of this case, titled Jakub’s Wake-Up Call, was written by William O’Brien. Copyright © The Case Method Institute. The revised version, Jakub’s Call, was developed by Alice F. Evans with the author’s permission.

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**Jakub's Call  Background Notes**

New Guinea is the world's largest tropical island. The eastern part, now Papua New Guinea was formerly under Australian authority but gained its independence in 1975. Meanwhile, from the opening bell of its declaration of independence in 1945, Indonesia wanted sovereign rule over all the territory to the west of New Guinea claimed by the Netherlands, then called West Irian. It was not until May 1963 that Indonesia gained control of the area now comprised of two Indonesian provinces – Papua and West Papua. It was the last remaining piece of the Dutch East Indies colonies.
Ethnically, there is no common tie between the Melanesian cultures of Papua/West Papua and that of Indonesia. In his autobiography, President Sukarno described West Irian as "a great undeveloped, impenetrable area of towering mountains and vast swamps. The inhabitants are dark-skinned Papuans. Their tools are stone axes, shells, and sticks. Their weapons are bows and arrows. They exist in primitive Stone Age conditions." Although cannibalism and tribal warfare are now banned, they were common elements of life for centuries.

Sukarno was not speaking prejudicially when describing Stone Age conditions in West Irian. National Geographic writer Thomas O'Neill describes the area as "one of the wildest, most isolated frontiers on earth." While the Indonesian government has taken many measures to try to modernize its most undeveloped province, O'Neill wonders how much, and at what sacrifice, the indigenous Irianese could fundamentally change. Animist beliefs, a pig-based economy, and traditions of headhunting and cannibalism make them totally different from their "fellow countrymen." As an eyewitness to much of the province's isolation, O'Neill states, "You don't easily take the forest out of the people." Nor did these people rejoice over their new political status and new rulers. In the 1970s and '80s, overt independence movements were crushed by the Indonesian army, and hundreds were killed. In the late 1990s, Indonesia was still unable to assimilate the Irianese into a true sense of country hood.

Meanwhile, Indonesia is one of the emerging economic powers of Asia and both Papua and West Papua are keys to greater national wealth, personal wealth, and political prestige. Thomas O'Neill writes: "With its feverish economy and the world's fourth largest population (200 million), Indonesia can't afford to lose West Irian. It sees the province not as one of the world's last sanctuaries of biodiversity, but as a huge depot of natural resources. Rain forests, with their valuable timber, blanket 85 percent of the territory. Rich deposits of copper and gold have been found in the mountains, pockets of oil in the lowlands." What's more, West Irian, like Sumatra and Kalimantan (Borneo), provides elbow room for a crowded Java, which holds over half the nation's entire population. "Irian Jaya – the tropical island that boasts snow-capped mountains sixteen thousand feet high right on the equator - is an enigma that will remain in the news."

**Freeport-McMoRan Copper & Gold, Inc.**

Freeport-McMoRan Copper & Gold, Inc. (FCX), is one of the world's largest and lowest-cost copper and gold producers. Based in New Orleans, Louisiana, Freeport-McMoRan began actual operations in West Irian in 1973, ten years after Indonesia gained sovereignty over the area, then a single province called Papua. A general description of Freeport's Indonesian activities in a 1995 annual report involve mineral exploration and development, mining, and milling of ore containing copper, gold, and silver and worldwide marketing of concentrates containing such metals.

During 1995, new areas of "potentially significant mineralization" within an area called the Golden Triangle were identified in an FCX report. "Our geologic understanding of the mineralization within the 'Golden Triangle' has allowed us to better direct our
exploration and drilling activities at potential targets which would provide the highest economic returns," states the report. CEO James R. Moffett reported to the shareholders that 1995 was a year of major achievements. The company "posted record operating and financial results and accomplished its goal of completing its mine [and] mill expansion activities in Indonesia significantly ahead of schedule."

Further, 1995 saw the first inhabitants move into a new town in the lowland area of West Irian, which provides housing for employees, community facilities, and a base for operating and administering FCX's business activities. President Suharto participated in the dedication ceremony, named the town Kuala Kencana (Golden Estuary), and expressed support for both the company's operations and the community development efforts. Income for 1995 increased 154 percent over 1994 results. And on July 31, 1995, FCX was added to the Standard and Poor's (S&P) 500 Index.

In contrast to the optimistic economic picture, however, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) terminated a political risk insurance contract on FCX that provided $100 million of coverage on its Indonesian operation. OPIC's rationale for the decision included concerns that FCX's mining operations had expanded beyond the original scope and that new environmental issues were associated with the expansion. In the annual report, Freeport-McMoRan stated that "OPIC lacks a legal basis for canceling the coverage and, therefore, the coverage remains in effect." FCX pursued the case in active arbitration for resolution. In April 1996, OPIC reinstated Freeport's insurance until the end of the year. Meanwhile, the company agreed it would set up a $100 million trust fund for the remediation of the site when the mine shuts down. FCX has a thirty-year lease with options to extend another twenty years.

Increasingly sensitive to hostile attacks on environmental and human rights issues, Freeport-McMoRan pursues a proactive stance related to its public image. On its home page on the World Wide Web, the company stated, "On April 30, 1996, James R. Moffett announced the creation of the Office of Social and Developmental Programs. This office will coordinate and advise our operations, foreign and domestic, on matters covering social and sustainable development issues. Included in this office as well will be the Freeport-McMoRan Foundation and domestic and foreign employee development program." Through its "Fast Facts" public relations releases, P. T. Freeport Indonesia (PTFI) reports that it has more training and opportunities than many large universities. With over sixteen thousand employees, the company relies on state-of-the-art technologies to compete in the international marketplace. Therefore, it must continually train and educate its people. In one such release, illustrative training and development opportunities were listed:

PTFI provides five thousand man-hours of training every month.
PTFI has a US $25 million venture capital program and business incubator project to promote local business development.
PTFI has sponsored over three hundred college and university scholarships for Indonesian students originating from Irian Jaya, well as other Indonesian students.
PTFI is committed to double the number of Irianese employees over five years and double that number again over the five years following. PTFI is committed to at least double the number of Irianese managers and supervisors over the coming ten years.

**An Irianese Perspective**
The presence and practices of the P. T. Freeport Indonesia mining operation evoke deep feelings on the part of indigenous Irianese people. Few people deny the positive developments as a result of the presence of the large corporate expatriate entity. New hospitals and new schools raise the level of education and health care for some of the people. Access to such facilities is an issue for many. Most people openly acknowledge the enriched coffers of the Indonesian government, thanks to taxes paid by PTFI; it is the largest foreign taxpayer in Indonesia. According to the Thomas O’Neill report, "Each day on average 7.2 million dollars' worth of copper, gold, and silver is dug out of its Grasberg open-pit mine in the Sudirman Mountains of the central highlands." Multiply that by one year, and the taxes due on gross income is formidable.

Indigenous peoples do not see a proportionate amount of development returning to the very areas that produced it. But there are feelings that tap in to something much deeper than the exchange of money. Some among the tribal people most affected identify earth and geological formations in that area as their "mother." Two processes disregard those beliefs and thereby guarantee resistance on the part of many of the people: dislocation and dumping. About one thousand of the fifteen thousand Amungme people were moved from their tribal area onto the tribal lands of the Komoro to free space for the mining development. Even if PTFI was innocent in the dislocation process, it receives some of the hostility that has been aimed at the national government since the earliest days of Indonesian independence. The dumping of tailings from the mining operation into the Agabogong River also causes major environmental problems.

What measures can be taken that promote economic development while respecting peoplehood, belief systems, and the rich biodiversity of one of the earth's unique locations?

*These background notes were written by William O’Brien in 2001.*

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**Case Study for Wednesday, January 14**

**Giving Thanks**

When Pastor Sam Lee received the call for help from Mr. Tom Cho, a prominent Korean-American merchant, he realized the situation was serious, but he had not known how serious until he began making inquiries in the community.
During a mid-October meeting, the South End Korean Merchants Association decided to sponsor a block party in South Park to express their appreciation for the community’s business. The merchants, most of whom sold clothing, beauty supplies, shoes, or groceries, voted to accept the proposal to have the party coincide with the American holiday of Thanksgiving. As enthusiasm for the project grew, some merchants offered to contribute money to buy turkeys; others offered products such as clothing or shoes.

The merchants raised enough funds to distribute 500 turkeys. Two weeks later the Association distributed flyers in the immediate area to announce the date and place of the party - the Sunday before Thanksgiving in South Park. As Tom Cho, President of the Korean American Merchants Association, interpreted for Pastor Lee, “We thought this would be a good way to show we appreciate the support of the community.”

The following week, to Cho’s surprise and distress, another set of flyers appeared in the neighborhood. These flyers called for a boycott of the block party and a protest march against the event. The time and place were identical to those given for the block party. In bold letters the flyers stated: “Korean merchants are blood-suckers. Kick them out of our neighborhood. They are trying to buy us with their gifts. Come together to protest. Get them out!” The flyers were unsigned.

Many Korean-American families who owned and operated stores in the South End, including Mr. Cho, attended and lived near Pastor Lee’s large Korean church in another part of the city. While Lee was not surprised to hear from Mr. Cho about ethnic tension in the neighborhood, he was deeply concerned about the level of anger in the flyer.

For over thirty years, the South End had been a stable community of predominantly lower- to middle-income African-American residents. The thriving business district near South Park, however, had a wide assortment of small businesses owned and operated by an ethnically diverse group of merchants. Korean-Americans had begun establishing small businesses in the area during the past ten years. Most of them had thrived. Almost all the older Korean storeowners had emigrated from Korea and still spoke their native language. Several of their children who assisted in the stores had been raised in the U.S. from childhood and spoke English well.

In response to his conversation with Mr. Cho, Rev. Sam Lee decided to visit colleagues in the Black Clergy Association whom he had met at a recent series of clergy prayer breakfasts. He also hoped to speak to some of the neighborhood residents.

Reverend Joshua Taylor, pastor of the South End AME (African Methodist Episcopal) church, welcomed Lee into his office and said he was equally disturbed by the tone of the flyers. He also shared with Lee another side of the situation: “Throughout the summer, city residents have been fighting the increase of delis that sell cheap 40-ounce bottles of malt liquor. It’s true that these sales are legal, but the effect on our neighborhood has been very destructive.

Groups of kids gather to drink on the street corners. This leads to underage drinking, fights, and shootings. Several of these delis are owned by Koreans who seem to have ignored the residents’ protests. Suddenly a group of Korean merchants offers free turkeys. Some residents are convinced that the Korean merchants are trying to bribe them to stop the protests and don’t care at all about the neighborhood.”

Rev. Taylor offered to go with Lee to meet Mr. Eli Johnson, an African American businessman and community activist who lived and worked in the South End. When they met,
Johnson first reminded Taylor and Lee that at least three years ago the African American community had renamed South Park as Malcolm X Park. He then pointed to Home Deli just a few doors down from his South End store. “The Korean who owns that beer deli started selling cheap malt liquor last April against the wishes of the local police and the community residents. The fights on this corner during the past summer were shameful, and the deli owner goes home at night with bags of money. The Korean storeowners do not hire the young African Americans in the neighborhood who desperately need jobs; they hire only their family members. These people don’t live here and they don’t want to be a part of our community. We would all be better off if their stores weren’t here.”

Lee heard a very different perspective from Mrs. Doris Allen, who lived in the South End and directed a community assistance program. She did not know who sent out the second set of flyers, but she suspected that the protest movement originated from outside the immediate area. “I’m embarrassed and distressed about the flyers. Many people in the South End are angry about the protest. They see the block party as nothing more than a way to say thanks. Moreover, with winter coming, there are poor families who would be glad to have shoes and clothes. A turkey can feed a hungry family for a week.”

“We don’t need turkeys; we need long term commitments to raising the living standards in the whole area.” Bill Kennedy, president of the South End Business and Residents Association, said he had learned about the Korean merchants’ block party at the Association’s last meeting only after the flyers had been distributed.

Bill continued, “At first glance, it sure looks to me like these merchants are trying to buy the community. We have worked successfully with the city to put in flower boxes and upgrade the bus stops and street signs in our business district. We have also been working for months to build cooperation between residents and businesses. The Koreans have not joined our Association and did not consult us at all about this party. The last thing we need is an event that increases racial tension.”

Pastor Lee also stopped at the South End police district headquarters to speak with Captain Larkin. Larkin acknowledged that only a small percentage of Korean-Americans owned area delis that sold liquor. “As a matter of fact, five delis in my district recently applied for liquor permits, but none of them are owned by Korean-Americans. I have been impressed with the Koreans’ commitment to neighborhood youth programs and to their churches. However, my officers are supportive of the residents’ opposition to liquor sales at these delis, including Home Deli. This is a volatile issue in the neighborhood, and we are concerned about possible violence. At this point, there is no way we can stop the give-away or the protest, but unless things cool down, I will certainly assign officers to the park on that Sunday.

When Sam Lee met with Tom Cho and Kim Song, the secretary of the South End Korean Merchants Association, he shared what he had learned from conversations in the community. They spoke in Korean, which was more comfortable for Kim Song. Tom Cho agreed that those deli-businesses that sold beer were a problem. Korean-Americans had been cautioning one another for nearly a year that there was community opposition to the delis.

“Koreans own only three of these delis in the entire South End, and our business association has opposed opening any additional liquor outlets. We cannot control those who sell beer, yet we are blamed for all the problems. Our Korean young people, who may understand the community better than we do, have told me that they are committed to confronting the situation. They say that we have promised something, and we should not back out now. Canceling the party would
be an affront to those who are expecting gifts. And if we cancel our plans because of anonymous threats, they say this makes us vulnerable to additional threats. They say we should proceed as we had planned.”

Kim Song shook his head: “I don’t understand how a gesture of kindness has led to such opposition. There is nothing political about what we are trying to do. It’s not a trick. It is an open-heart gesture. We have been successful in our businesses because South End residents buy from our stores. We want to return some of the profits to them. But I do not want to create any trouble. It may be best to cancel the event. What do you think, Pastor?”

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Additional Case Studies for Written Assignments on “Mediation”

Hartford Seminary Course DI 680
Conflict Transformation and Peace Building
January 12-16, 2015

1. **Prairie Storm** (US based a Christian Congregational conflict about the American flag.)

2. **Beyond the Battle** (US school board conflict involves the wider community)

3. **The One School that Became Two** (Maluku Islands, Indonesia following sectarian violence)

4. **Fire on the Mountain** (N. Nigeria A new mosque in Christian neighborhood)

5. **No Reforms, No Elections** (East Africa- unfulfilled promises on Constitutional changes before national elections)

1. **Prairie Storm**

“Our Committee met last night. At the urging of Ed Schmidt, we voted unanimously to move the flag from the library to its rightful place in the sanctuary. This is a time of crisis for our country. We are called to support our President and our men in arms as strongly as we can. I assume you will docket this for the Council meeting tomorrow night so we can proceed with funding for a permanent brass flag stand.” Martha Barrington thanked Frank Berman, Chairman of the Property Committee, for his call and slowly replaced the receiver in its cradle. She wasn’t sure whether to laugh or cry, but she was sure that her response to the Property Committee would be critical for her ministry at Faith Community Church.

Martha had been called to Faith Church six months earlier, in the summer of 1991. She was the church’s first woman pastor in its eighty-year history. The church was prominently located near
the center of the semi-rural, mid-western town of 10,000. The congregation of 650 members had a strong German immigrant background. While some of the older members were still farmers, most of the young married couples and newer members were employed in area light industry, local businesses, or in the community college. The church was governed by a Congregational Council composed of an elected president and twelve elected members, each of whom chaired or served on various church boards.

Soon after Martha arrived from her previous pastorate in Maryland, Fellowship Hall in Faith Church was renovated. She remembered helping Sam Meyers, the custodian, take down the flag before the painters arrived. He remarked at the time that his father had talked about the original flag which had been placed in the sanctuary during World War I. Sam had said something about how important it was for the immigrants to identify with their new homeland. He recalled that the flag had been moved to Fellowship Hall in about 1970 during major renovations in the sanctuary. Martha and Sam had moved the flag into the library which was located in a side wing near the church offices. Martha realized that no one had commented on the flag’s being moved, and frankly she had forgotten about it.

Martha believed that the present surge of patriotism surrounding Desert Storm and support for U.S. troops engaged in active combat were pushing the flag into the spotlight. She admitted to herself that she had some real qualms about the speed with which the government rushed into this battle. Although she was not old enough to have been directly affected by anti-Vietnam politics, she remembered her distress at the Watergate revelations and her disillusionment following the Iran-Contra scandal. She saw herself as a loyal citizen who carried some skepticism about government motives and policies. However, the strong media exposure of Desert Storm and what felt like overwhelming national support for the military engagement had quelled any public comments of concern she might have made. The fact that a National Guard unit in which several local men and women served was scheduled for imminent departure for the Gulf had heightened the community’s support for its troops.

One member of congregation who had not been silent about his doubts about Desert Storm was Alex Berg. Alex had served in the Peace Corps in Central America; he was an associate professor of political science and a member of the Congregational Council. He had drawn parallels between “the immorality of U.S. aggression” in Nicaragua and Panama and the “knee-jerk military reaction” to the conflict with Iraq. Alex served on the Education Committee and had led a well-attended fall adult class on the Church in Latin America. Alex would probably speak strongly against moving the flag into the sanctuary, not only from a position of separation of church and state but also from his understanding of the call for people of faith to be peacemakers who live in an increasingly global community. If a majority of the Council agreed with Alex, they could override the Property Committee’s decision.

As Martha began to search for the best approach to the situation, she pictured other members of the Congregational Council. The smiling face of Sarah Hawkins came immediately to mind. Although she was a good bit older than Martha, Sarah had warmly welcomed Martha into the congregation. Sarah was an active community volunteer, her husband owned a local hardware store, and her daughter was in an Army unit stationed in Germany. Sarah had been an interested and active participant in Alex’s course on Latin America.

Martha realized that a large majority of Council members and their respective committees were fairly representative of the congregation - a healthy mix of men and women holding a variety of theological and political perspectives and ranging in age from their thirties to early sixties. The one exception was the Property Committee. Frank Berman was a retired banker who had recently celebrated his seventy-second birthday. He chaired the only all-male committee which was composed of some of the older members of the congregation. Several were farmers, all were
theologically and politically conservative, and most were veterans, including Ed Schmidt, who was active in the local American Legion Post. Martha had not heard of any direct opposition to her call as pastor from members of the Property Committee, but she was keenly aware it was the only committee which had not invited her to join them for a meeting.

Almost without “shifting gears” she recalled with surprising clarity a recent conversation with her father. Her parents lived on a farm a little over 200 miles away; she had visited them the week after Christmas. Their church of 150 members was located five miles from the nearest town of 600 people. Most of its members had no education beyond a high school degree. Martha saw her “home congregation” strongly influenced by a piety that values work and quiet faith.

Martha’s father was sixty-three and a veteran of the Korean War. He had an eighth-grade education. Her father held the view that everything was “going to the dogs,” whether it be the church, his family, or the world economy. He was very much opposed to Martha’s vocation, believing that “only men should be pastors.” Nevertheless, her parents were interested in her new congregation and curious about how other congregations do things. They had been sitting at the kitchen table for a mid-morning coffee break. Martha had been sharing her reflections about a recent funeral service for a family she described as “not very close.”

I didn’t see anybody shed a tear until we got to the cemetery. But, you know, it’s funny what gets to people. We were standing around the grave waiting for everybody to get settled. The family didn’t show any emotion at all during the prayers or scripture readings. But when the funeral director handed the flag to the widow, the whole family broke down.

Martha’s father queried, “Handed the flag?”
Martha responded.

You know, the funeral director handed a folded U.S. flag to the widow at the graveside and said, “On behalf of the President of the United States and a grateful nation . . . etc. etc. etc. I don’t get it. They were playing taps on a tape recorder propped on a car hood, and the color guard was three old guys in tight uniforms, standing on the other side of the grave, reading from a VFW manual on funerals.

When Martha commented on her dismay at the reaction of the family to a cheap flag that the funeral director had brought with him, her father exclaimed, “I can’t believe the way you people disrespect the flag. This is the greatest nation on the face of the earth, and you forget that we’re privileged to live here. You have a flag at the front of the church don’t you?”

“No. They moved the flag several years ago during a renovation project and never put it back. We don’t have a Christian flag either. The Church doesn’t belong to a country, you know. It belongs...”

Martha’s mother interrupted. “A Christian flag?” Martha turned to her mother. “You know, like you have here. That white flag with red and blue on it at the front of the church. I think they started using them after one of the wars, to say “God is on our side’ and all that.”

Her father’s voice was even more agitated. “By God, you can’t tell me there shouldn’t be a flag in church. We wouldn’t be able to have churches at all if it weren’t for that flag. We live in the greatest nation on the face of the earth, and you’d better not forget it.”

Martha’s mother brought over a plate of fresh muffins, offered more coffee, and asked Martha if she had seen her cousin’s new baby.

Martha remembered being grateful for her mother’s intervention and relieved by the thought that back in her new church, she wouldn’t have to deal with the flag. With a wry smile, Martha
realized that less than four weeks later she was dealing very directly with issues she thought she had left behind. Although Martha strongly disagreed with her father, their conversation had made her more aware of the depth of feeling people like her father and Ed Schmidt had for their country. She was worried, however, that the surge of nationalism energized by Desert Storm would diminish or even reverse what Alex Berg had referred to as healthy signs that their congregation was becoming more global in its understanding of the Church and the world.

Martha was still getting to know this congregation. But she knew enough to ascertain that if she didn’t want open conflict about the flag in the Council and perhaps in the church, she had better come up with some creative approaches before tomorrow night’s meeting. The evening wasn’t going to be saved by fresh coffee and muffins.

This case was written by JoAnn Post and Alice Frazer Evans. Published in The Journal of the Association for Case Teaching. Reprinted by permission.

2. Beyond the Battle (US school board conflict involves the wider community)

Martha Jones felt an uncharacteristic knot in the pit of her stomach as she thought about tomorrow night’s school board meeting. Her first meeting as president of the Springfield Board of Education could well be another battle - this time over how the Board would respond to escalating violence in the schools.

Springfield was a city of 200,000 people with half a million in the Greater Springfield region. The city was surrounded by highly diverse areas of suburban wealth and rural poverty. Springfield, with one of the largest united school systems in the state, was among the thirty poorest cities in the country. More than half of the 35,000 school children - 55 percent black, 24 percent Latino and 18 percent white - qualified for free or reduced price meals. Although there was some increase in minority population in the wealthy suburbs, the population there was still predominantly white. The local newspaper had run several features on the effects of the recession and those who had lost their jobs in manufacturing, high tech and services. Almost all of the stories highlighted the residents' feelings of vulnerability and anxiety. A new city administration was recently elected on a platform of political, economic and educational reform.

Martha Jones was a life-long resident of the predominantly black south side of Springfield; she had been a teacher in the Springfield school system for more than 30 years. Ironically, she was one of the original plaintiffs in a twenty-five-year-old desegregation suit against the School Board on which she now served. Because the city's court-ordered desegregation plan of the early 1970's had failed to bring about integrated schools, Martha still refused to sign off on the suit. As a child advocate and activist teacher, she had often been at war with the Board of Education. Public dissatisfaction with the schools had assured her election to the Board three years ago after she retired from her teaching position. Then last month she was elected to the presidency by a narrow margin.
Martha believed that the city and the Board had to find a way beyond their battles. "Our first priority is the children," was her plea. But she knew that it was easier to declare priorities than move the school system ahead in a positive manner. After years of public fights about the budget and the suspension and forced resignation of the last superintendent, many residents viewed the Board as dysfunctional. It was going to be hard to recover credibility. Martha also knew that the issues were complicated by a Board and a city polarized by class and race.

The Board was facing a highly controversial proposal to install expensive metal detectors in the city's two high schools and several junior highs and hire additional trained security guards for all of the schools. A gang culture had begun to develop in three of the poorest black and Hispanic areas of the city. City police attributed three recent "drive-by" shootings to drug activity. Elementary, junior high and high school teachers were reporting an increasing number of knives and guns in the schools. The current proposal for metal detectors was prompted by an incident in one of the city high schools in which a teacher was threatened by an angry student with a handgun. Martha saw the only possible funds for the increased security as those budgeted to implement a hard-won, long-term educational reform program.

The reform program had been generated by a group of parent advocates following the guidelines of a national program titled America 2000. The plan focused on high standards and student performance assessment. It included moving the system from central to local site-based decision making about budget, personnel and curriculum and new programs such as peer mediation. The parent group, calling itself Springfield 2000, had consulted with the Superintendent's office, representatives of bargaining units for teachers, with principals, custodians, and members of the Board of Education including Martha during her first term on the Board. Martha had supported the basic concepts of the reform package; a motion to budget funds to implement Phase I was passed by the Board just prior to the city elections.

Martha suspected that election shifts in Board membership could mean that she would have the deciding vote on continued support of the reform package. She was reluctant to begin her term as president with business as usual - win-lose tactics through power blocks on the Board. But with limited funds, systemic reform was being pitted against immediate needs. "How can we spend for the future, when we can't pay for the present?" was a question she had heard more than once. Increased violence and drug use had everyone concerned, if not in a panic. Martha was unsure if this was the best or the worst time to implement systemic reform.

Martha had personally contacted the six other board members as well as received dozens of phone calls this past week. In preparation for the Board meeting, she reviewed her notes from the numerous conversations. Martha looked first at notes from a personal visit and several phone conversations with Sally Thompson, a former President of the Springfield Junior League and now principal parent spokesperson for the reform initiative.

"Springfield 2000 will make systemic changes in the educational system. I know this scares some people; members of the Board, administrators, principles, teachers, staff, and members of the City Council and state legislature might lose a little power. However, many of us believe it is the only recourse before the courts enforce another mandatory program to achieve greater integration. The original court plan failed to bring the intended result of better education for all. The magnet schools thrived; the rest of the system deteriorated, leading to more white flight to the suburbs and private schools. The community needs time to build consensus for a comprehensive system of quality education. The proposal focuses on long-term transformation, not a quick fix."
Sally shared with Martha, "I acknowledge there is an increase of violence in the city. I also believe that fear is a more powerful motivator than excellence. I know we are talking about using seriously limited funds for restructuring and educational reform versus security. But you need to remember that we worked on this proposal for three years with several hundred people in the school system and the community. There was an emerging consensus that we need accountability that focuses on results. Site-based decision making calls for active and sustained parental and business community involvement in our schools. Decentralization of authority is the only way we will ever reclaim local ownership and pride in city schools. Direct parent and community involvement is also the best way to address the violence and fear.”

Serious concern about violence prompted the comments of three-term School Board member Thomas Jackson, a local businessman who had been Martha's ally on a number of issues. "Until we get back control of our schools and streets from the gangs, reform doesn't mean a thing," he declared in a conversation outside church on Sunday morning. "We have students being shot by other students on the grounds of the school. We can't wait around for conflict resolution skills. We need conflict control with metal detectors in every school, more security guards to confiscate weapons, and policemen with dogs to locate drugs."

Thomas had a different perspective on the school desegregation suit. He confessed to Martha his deep discomfort with the prospect of court intervention that might bus his children into the white suburbs. "It may be 'safer' out there, but it is devoid of the African American values of respect and reverence that in my youth in the ghetto encouraged the whole black community to act as parents. Segregated schools are not the primary threat to quality education. It is radically unequal access to funds, services and opportunity. These white elitist reformers pushing for state supported, regional reforms are not terrified to walk their streets at night or attend after school events. We have some white tenured teachers in our black schools that are not only afraid of our kids, they actually despise them. With this tenure system teachers have no accountability to the community, only to union rules. I am going to fight to put money into immediate protection, not into this pretense of long-term systems change."

"I am suspicious of reforms that pile more expectation on teachers to save our kids and the city," Michael Gonzales, President of the Springfield Federation of Teachers, shared with Martha at a reception honoring the Teacher of the Year. "A segregated school system is a result of segregated neighborhoods sustained by economic inequality. The crisis in this city is about poverty and the subsequent decline of the family system. Fifty percent of black children, 30 percent of Hispanic children and 20 percent of the white children in our school system are living with one parent, usually a woman who is either unemployed or underemployed. Behind these figures are high divorce rates, teen pregnancy and out-of-wedlock babies. The youth culture promoted on TV reduces respect for authority and promotes violence and craving to have the things media advertises. Our city race relations have gone to hell. We live in almost completely isolated worlds of dominant and minority cultures. We meet only in the work place and even there we carefully keep our distance."

Michael continued, "Our teachers are concerned about safety and job security in a frightening economy. Many of us support elements of the reform package, particularly more control over curriculum. But they feel dumped on by a community that expects them to solve the problems parents can't or won't face. Teachers are uneasy about additional burdens of team teaching, integrated disciplines, and new topics like conflict resolution added to their teaching responsibilities. Earlier school reforms focused on minimal student competence based on state-wide testing. This approach pushed teachers to teach for tests rather than develop the abilities of
individual students. This reform proposal for performance-based student outcome seems more promising. But the bottom line is, no matter where they live, people are afraid of violence and drugs - for themselves and their children. Martha, most teachers will support funding security measures at the cost of long-term reform because they are directly affected by the violence."

John Stewart, the CEO of one of the city's largest corporations, cornered Martha at one of the few social events attended by Whites and African-Americans - a dinner celebrating the contributions of Martin Luther King Jr. "Martha, the community has high hopes that as the new president of the School Board, you'll be able to bring this destructive feuding to an end. Our goal of regional economic renewal can't be realized without school reform. We have a beautiful historic city that many firms find attractive until they look at the schools. They ask if we can equip a work force able to cope with the new technological and competitive era we are entering. Let's be candid. You were a good teacher in an increasingly dysfunctional system. Potential employees who visit our city, often people committed to public education, wonder where to put their children. They aren't merely fleeing to the suburbs but to private and parochial schools. Many are advocates of a school voucher system in hopes of achieving some return on their tax dollar and some choice in their children's education. You know I still support the public school system, but my children were fortunate to be in magnet schools, and it was tough even there.

"My corporation supports educational reform," John declared. "Corporate funds are tight now, but we'll put money into the program and support corporate community volunteers, even promote businesses adopting specific schools to make reform work. Ultimately, however, the State Legislature holds the purse strings for poor urban communities. The increasing violence and especially the apparent inability of city schools to deliver on student outcome make it harder to justify the investment. School systems like Dade County are expanding their programs of conflict resolution in the midst of one of the most violent urban areas in the country. The program is already paying off with reduced conflict in the schools. This is just one of many reasons why the reform package must continue to have top priority. But if the Board retreats from reform to fund a short-term security system or, God forbid, higher teachers salaries, that may be the last straw. The city won't get another chance for reform with the base of community support we apparently have now. The Board can't continue to fight like jackasses and make every vote a four to three political power play. Accountability for all is essential; citizens can no longer avoid appropriate critique of incompetent performances by students, teachers, city or school administrators, whether white, black or Latino, for fear of being called racist. Accountability is a pillar of reform."

Martha glanced at the clock over the kitchen table where she was working. Time is running out, she thought, for Springfield and for me. The security resolution was already on the agenda of tomorrow's Board of Education meeting, and the forces were lining up for the battle. In his interviews the new school superintendent supported the educational reform process. However, Martha was uncertain how he would respond to the various political pressures that were bound to come. How blessed it would feel to be beyond the battle of security versus reform. What kind of leadership was required of an old war horse, she wondered. When the phone rang, Martha realized how much she needed peace and quiet to think this through, not more pressure from her friends at the union or in the community.
**Case 3. (Maluku Islands, Indonesia following sectarian violence)**

**The One School that Became Two**

Abdul doesn’t feel good about the developments in his village even though the residents have come a long way since the conflict four years ago. At that time nearly all the houses in his village were destroyed, including the primary school where he had worked as a teacher for ten years. Abdul and the other Muslim families fled from the conflict area and returned to the village of Marimoi two years ago. Although small groups of Muslims returned to Marimoi earlier, Abdul and his family stayed for nearly three years as internally displaced persons (IDPs) in a camp in the capital town of North Maluku province.

When Abdul’s family returned to Marimoi, they found that three classrooms had been rebuilt by the District government, but not on the original site. This time the school was built on the far edge of the Muslim part of the village, while the original location of the school was in the middle of the village, still in the Muslim part, but close to the Christian part of the village. Because the school was built far away from the Christian part of the village, the Christians were not sending their children to the newly built school. The Christians had returned to the village long before the Muslims did, and the Christian teachers had already started education activities in one of the empty IDP plywood barracks in the Christian part of the village. Consequently, the primary school now had two locations – one with the Christian teachers and students in the wooden barrack and one with the Muslim teachers and students in the new school building.

Abdul took up his teaching role in the Muslim part of the school but continued to talk with his former colleagues who were now teaching in the Christian part of the school. Several Muslim and Christian teachers shared his concern that this separatism was not conducive to a peaceful future of the village. Abdul had been talking most with John who taught in the Christian part of the school. Both agreed that for the sake of long-lasting peace in the village, it would be very important for the children to be educated together, just like they were before the conflict.

Abdul knew that the Christian community leaders were requesting an independent status for their school. This would mean a complete split away from the Muslim school. Abdul and John decided to meet with the appointed school principal for both school locations. The school principal, Pak Achmad, who has his office in the Muslim school, was very clear. “I am determined to prevent a split into two schools. If the number of my students is officially reduced, the education department will send much less money and our school will suffer. We are still the ones who receive the funds for all the children in this village, and we will continue to send a part of these funds to the Christian children’s classrooms. However, we are still hopeful that the Christian children and teachers will join with us in our school here, as this will give us all hope for a future in which we live together in harmony.”

A few weeks before their meeting with the principal Abdul and John were among the Muslim and Christian teachers from Marimoi who were invited for a meeting at the District Educational Department. The meeting was called after a complaint from Principal Achmad that the Christian part of the school was ‘illegal’. The Christian teachers did not attend the meeting. However, the day after this meeting the Christian delegation arrived and asked to meet with the District Educational Department. John and Abdul later learned that the Education Department decided not

*“Pak” is an Indonesian title similar to “Mr.” in English.*
to split the school into two schools but also not to force the community to join as one school. They hoped that over time the situation would resolve itself. John and Abdul were worried that the longer decisions were postponed the more difficult the resolution.

Leaving Principal Achmad behind in his school, Abdul and John walked the one-kilometer stretch along the main road north to the Christian side of the village to meet with Pak Verry and his wife Krista who have three children in the Christian school. They wanted to meet with them because they were aware that they did not fully understand the Christian community leaders who demanded the split. Pak Verry explained that it had been both confusing and unacceptable that the school was rebuilt seemingly as far away as possible from the Christian community. “The Muslims did this on purpose,” Pak Verry said accusingly. “The original school was in the middle of the village. All the children in this village used to go to the same school, no matter what their religion.” Krista added emotionally; “How can I send my children one kilometer into the Muslim area every day? Everything may look safe now, but what will happen if the children start throwing stones at each other? What will happen if there is open conflict again, and I am not able to reach my children?” Pak Verry added to his wife’s comments: “Our children have a right to education and a right to security. That is why the government must provide a school in our area!”

Abdul and John spoke to several other people in both parts of the village. The two teachers agreed to think about all they had heard and to meet together on Saturday after classes to discuss possibilities. After they parted, Abdul walked home past the newly rebuilt Muslim houses deep in his own thoughts. He was thinking about the rumors that he heard from the Christians who suspected the principal of not sharing the government assistance equally over the two schools. Abdul agreed that there was indeed a need for more transparency about this.

On his way home, John passed the ruins of the former school and greeted Pak Susilo the village’s aged bee-keeper. Pak Susilo was well respected in the village because he had worked for many years as a teacher in the school and had taught many of the village parents when they were young children. He had retired about eight years ago to tend his bees and sell his honey to the villagers. Even though he followed the old traditional religion of the area, he too had fled during the inter-religious violence four years ago. After they had greeted each other, John asked Pak Susilo what he thought about the current separation of the schools. Pak Susilo responded that there had been tensions between Christian and Muslim parents before but this was worse than anything he remembered.

John remembered that Christians from another village destroyed the school. Even though the Muslims are a clear majority in the village of Marimoi, the Muslims are a minority in the sub-district. John wondered if it was because Christians destroyed the school that the Muslim people felt they had the right to decide where the new school should be built.

When both of the teachers reached home and greeted their own children, one thing remained in their thoughts. How could the children’s education become a source of peace and not division in the village of Marimoi?

Written by Jacobus Koen, Centre for Peace and Reconciliation, Jakarta, Indonesia
"We have had enough of religious crises in this city," warned Busari Adekola, Chairman of Erinle Local Government Council. Adekola was presiding over an emergency meeting of the Saka Landlord Association. Adekola had been delegated by the Military Administrator of Kongo State to intervene in a religious dispute brewing in the area.

The Association meeting had lasted for several hours. Finally, Adekola made a concise announcement to the gathered members: "My assignment from His Excellency is to help you seek a permanent solution to this problem. We now seem to have reached deadlock. I am giving you three extra days to consult with the leaders of the Muslims and come up with a joint decision about how to deal with the controversy surrounding the land acquired by the Muslims on which to build their mosque. After this period of grace, the government will fulfill its constitutional responsibility and will deal summarily with the matter. Any of you who thereafter constitutes a threat to the security of this environment shall be dealt with ruthlessly."

Lost in thought, Remi Akomolafe, Chairman of the Saka Property Owners Association and the Councillor representing the Saka ward in Erinle Local Government Council, watched as Mr. Adekola and the Director of Town Planning, who had accompanied him, rudely left the meeting without bidding any of the elders farewell as local traditions demand. Akomolafe was worried that this crisis was coming at a time when the success of government-appointed Councilors in the local government system were assessed by the degree to which they ensured peace in their constituencies.

"Mere rattling of an ant. The earth has enough strength to bear the weight of whatever is falling from the sky," Karimu Oje, the youngest member of the Property Owners Association consoled his Chairman as they prepared to leave the meeting. "We have lived enough years on the surface of this earth to know what is good for us and what is not. What we are saying, and what we shall continue to say, is that no mosque shall be built in this neighbourhood." From another corner of the room, Olaoba Ojo, the owner of five commercial buildings in the community and a powerful businessman with a reputation for mobilising residents of Saka, exclaimed, "The market is over; buyers and sellers should now be on their way home. There is nothing more to discuss or negotiate with anybody. If the Muslims try to build a mosque here ten times, we will physically pull it down twenty times. Let the government deal with us forty times."

Remi Akomolafe was seriously disturbed by the hard-line positions of his colleagues. He found it difficult to see this religious conflict as one about which local landlords and property owners could afford to defy the military government. Several lives had been lost in the past on matters of this nature. Akomolafe was convinced that the government would do anything to prevent the religious conflict from escalating into violence. He saw the only way out as resolving the conflict before the government drafted the police, popularly known as "Kill-and-Go," into the area. Reflecting on possible ways out of the problem, Akomolafe viewed several images of the past stages of the conflict that came vividly to mind.
Saka is one of eight small settlements or wards within the area governed by the Erinle Local Government Council. While the whole area has about 35,000 residents, the small settlement of Saka has about 1,000 residents. Most of the residents belong to the Nigerian middle class. Like residents in other wards in this council area, the residents of Saka have organized a Property Owners Association. The association serves as a forum where problems related to the development of the community are openly debated and resolved. The Association is headed by an elected chairman. Until the recent dispute about the mosque, the Saka Association focused its attention on how to maintain internal security in the community. Members contributed money to employ private security guards to patrol the neighbourhood at night.

Saka is known as a peaceful, Christian-dominated community. It has a number of churches in which people often drum and dance for several hours of the day. There is no record of complaints to authorities about noise from these churches. The Saka settlement has a very small Muslim population of about 100 men and women. This is one of the few wards in the Erinle Local Government Council area with such a low Muslim population.

The nearest central mosque to the Saka settlement is located at Ode-Muslim, about one kilometre away. This ward, which is also located in the Erinle Local Government Council area, is primarily inhabited by Hausa settlers. Members of the Muslim community who live in Saka usually do their daily prayers in front of their central mosque at Ode-Muslim.

Early in the year, a group of Muslims purchased vacant land in the Saka community. This information reached other members of the Saka community in February through a sign erected on the land stating that the land belonged to the Muslim Community of Saka and that Muslims were constructing a local mosque on the site. The sign also stated, "All trespassers on the land shall be prosecuted." First to see the sign was a young boy who used the vacant plot as a football field. Isaac ran home to report his discovery to his father, Enimimo Kekere, a "born again" Christian. Kekere exclaimed, "What kind of nonsense is this? If the Muslims need land for building their mosque, why don't they go elsewhere? Why this Christian-dominated neighbourhood?"

Enimimo Kekere immediately registered his objections with Remi Akomolafe, the Chairman of Saka Property Owners Association. Then trouble began to erupt as one landlord after another objected to the idea of building a mosque in the neighbourhood. Within a week the community had become polarized into two camps - the majority Christian population against the minority Muslims.

Meetings of the Saka Property Owners Association were usually held on the last Saturday of the month. Akomolafe ensured that the meeting for the month of February was well attended. Both Christians and Muslims had come to express their views on the growing inter-religious conflict in the community.

First to speak was the Rashid, Imam of the Muslims. He was not pleased with the uncompromising remarks made about him and other Muslims in the community since the land for building their mosque had been acquired. "Islam is a religion of peace. We do not want to be harassed. We acquired the land legitimately and reserve the right to put the land to whatever use pleases us. Nigeria is a secular state; her constitution guarantees freedom of movement and worship."
Omowe, an atheist and a retired civil servant, was the first to react. "This is a low density area. It is supposed to be a serene environment and not a place where people are encouraged to use their ear-deafening loudspeakers for calling early morning prayers as practised in all places where mosques are tolerated."

Momoh Alaga, the most junior member of the Alaga family from whom the Muslims bought the land, assured the meeting that there was no cause for alarm as the controversial land was still the property of the Alaga family. "To the best of my knowledge none of our family land has been sold to anybody. Otherwise, I would have been consulted by whoever sold the land. The land still remains the property of my late father. If the ownership is to change, it must be with my consent."

Are Olowo, a wealthy businessman who owned the only big hotel and supermarket in the neighbourhood, expressed his disappointment with the position of Momoh Alaga: "To the best of everyone’s knowledge, the Muslim community has purchased the land in question. If Momoh has any scores to settle with his senior brothers on this, he should do that during their family meeting and not at this forum." Olowo asked why the majority of the Christians in the neighbourhood were opposed to the idea of Muslims building a mosque on the controversial land. "The Muslims own the land; they bought it with their sweat. What they are simply proposing is to bring development closer to this community. I support them. I will not support any attempt to promote religious intolerance in this neighbourhood. This was not one of those things that Jesus Christ asked me to do as a precondition for meriting the Kingdom of God!"

Since the February meeting of the Property Owners Association, the religious conflict had become popular knowledge, and various media located in the town offered different interpretations of the issues in the conflict. The government intervention followed a sensational media story and the publication of a petition written by one of the Saka property owners. The petition demanded that the Town Planning authorities deny approval for the mosque as it would constitute "noise pollution" of the environment.

"This is surely a fire on the mountain," Remi Akomolafe said to himself. "The leaders on top of the roof are the first to be burned." Akomolafe knew that the majority of his Association colleagues would not support the attempt to build a mosque in the neighbourhood. The Muslims stated that they would not give up the idea of building their mosque on the controversial land. At the same time, the government was threatening to deal summarily with the matter if the majority of the property owners refused to negotiate with the Muslims.

As if just waking from a slumber, Akomolafe yelled at his colleagues, "Gentlemen, where do we go from here? Do we become permanently divided over this small matter and allow ourselves to be bullied by law enforcement agents? Or do we cooperate with one another and by so doing let the government know that we are mature enough to solve our problems?"

The reaction of the house was riotous. Hearing shouts of "No agreement!" and "No compromise!", Akomolafe was becoming increasingly disturbed. He reluctantly adjourned the meeting: "Gentlemen, let's dispatch for today and reconvene tomorrow. As we all reflect about a permanent solution to this problem, we must place the interests of the entire community in our hearts. We must not think of our own individual feelings as the only approach for dealing with the situation."
As he watched the Property Owners Association members file out into street, Remi Akomolafe wondered how he could use the extra days granted by the Chairman of Erinle Local Government Council to deal with the problem.

Written by Dr. Albert Olawale. The names of all persons and places in this case have been disguised to protect the privacy of the actual individuals involved in this situation. Copyright by Center for Conflict Resolution, University of South Africa.

Case 5 (East Africa- unfulfilled promises on Constitutional changes before national elections)

No Reforms, No Elections

Mr Joshua Waleo, a respected business man, recalled the morning several weeks ago when he looked out his window onto a busy street in the capital city of this outwardly serene but inwardly simmering country in the eastern part of Africa. He pondered on the peace of his country as he watched the street children begging and harassing passersby. He saw newspaper vendors running away as policemen forcibly tried to collect an issue of a journal that criticised the ruling party and the President. Multi-party politics still had not taken root, he thought. There had been a lot of talk lately that more violence was in the offing in connection with the new elections. "The next elections are only weeks away, and the issue of reforms has not received due attention. If we go into the next elections without some basic Constitutional, legal and administrative reforms, including a revised voter registration process, we shall surely witness another threat to our young democracy with all the hope that it held for a new Africa. Somehow a way must be found to get the ruling party, Freedom Party (FP), and the opposition Reform Party (RP) to talk, and it must be done soon!"

Joshua thought about how he could get civil society and religious leaders to become engaged. He had just been elected spokesperson of the increasingly influential Coalition of Civic Associations. He was convinced that civic associations and the Christian churches, which represented a majority of the population, should be able to make a difference in diffusing tension and promoting peaceful change. Joshua recalled the musings of the leader of the Christian Church Association, Rev. Amos Tumwini, "The churches clearly don’t want more violence! What if we could get the Muslim leaders to cooperate with the Church and civic leaders? Then we would surely make a difference."

Joshua telephoned his friend Sheikh Ahmed, the chairman of the Council of Muslims. "The situation is getting tense. I fear that if a solution is not found, we will see a level of violence and destruction to mirror what happened recently in our neighbouring countries of Rwanda and the DRC! You and I know our people, and we know that they are God-fearing. We need to consult on how to support change in a peaceful manner. We must not let our people suffer the consequences of ignorance. At the same time we must not abdicate our responsibility as civic and religious leaders in the political process."
Sheikh Ahmed responded, "Joshua, have you become a clairvoyant? Yesterday our Muslim Council met and this was the issue of concern. Perhaps we should get the Church and Muslim Council together with the Civic Association to share ideas."

As the tension between FP and RP grew, Joshua, Sheikh Ahmed and Amos Tumwini conferred with their civic and religious constituencies. After numerous meetings, it was agreed to have an equal number of three representatives from each group to form a facilitation team of nine members, with the three leaders as co-chairs. The team members were all strongly against violence, most supported some reforms before the election, but they differed in which party they supported. There was no response by either party to a public announcement of the joint agreement.

Joshua’s mind returned to the events following the announcement. The demand for reforms increased. The ruling party and its President continued to refuse any debate on reforms, arguing that there was no time before the elections for a review of the voter registration process and certainly not a comprehensive review of the Constitution. The President’s statements had angered Joshua’s civil society network and the opposition Reform Party (RP). RP’s members were mostly non-governmental organisations, opposition members of parliament and a host of individuals who were former detainees or exiles who in one way or another had suffered at the hands of the current government. RP also included young intellectuals and other youth who were simply pro-change. The spokesperson for RP was Mr. Badiliko Wakili, a law professor who had never vied for a Parliamentary seat. For RP supporters the time for change was now or never.

Joshua recalled the most recent meeting of the RP. Prof. Wakili reacted to the claims made by FP that there was no time to consider reforms: "Why should FP say there is no time when it is they who created this situation? The President announced two years ago that the voter registration process and the Constitution would be reviewed. Nothing has been done and we are facing new elections. FP cannot expect us to accept going into the elections handicapped. Laws under the guise of public security that bar us from campaigning must be reviewed. We need time on the national radio service. Otherwise the national radio should not be used to spread the propaganda of any political party. We cannot continue to suffer arrests, beatings and brutality from the police and have virtually no recourse in law because the judiciary has no independence. In short, multi-partyism cannot flourish in a system that largely operates as a single party with massive Presidential powers. This time FP will not get away with its manoeuvres. We shall call for mass action, and we shall make this country ungovernable if that is what is required to bring about change. Let FP not be deceived. What has happened to Mobutu can also happen here."

Joshua knew that Prof. Wakili’s statement was not an empty threat. Then, late last week - to the chagrin of the President - RP supported demonstrations in the city. The demonstrators were demanding a review of the Constitution and implementation of legal and administrative reforms that would create a level playing ground for the next general elections. These demonstrations almost coincided with an important national holiday. The President had invited friends from the region to share in the celebrations. The widespread participation in the demonstrations convinced RP that they could move the political process forward.

The President issued a statement that RP was motivated by foreigners because Africans never quarrel in the presence of their guests. His statements were followed by the voice of Mr. George Kabogo, one of the President’s closest aides. Kabogo reminded the country that during his tenure the President brought peace among conflicting tribes and brought not only stability but international investments and grants which have strengthened the economy. “This is not the time to challenge the government. Open insurrection will drive away our investors and incite renewed
tribal conflict.” Later on the same afternoon, there were hushed rumors that several of the demonstrators had been beaten and arrested by police, but there was no report about this on the evening news. Joshua could not confirm the rumors, but he was even more convinced of the need to act.

When Joshua got to the office this morning, he found an urgent message. RP officials wanted the civic and religious community to facilitate dialogue between them and the ruling party. Before Joshua could settle down, his secretary brought him the newspaper with the headline: "FP asks religious and civic leaders to intervene." Many thoughts crossed his mind about how to embark on the process. He then contacted Sheikh Ahmed and Rev. Tumwini. They came immediately to his office and soon agreed that this was the kind of opening they had hoped for. They needed to respond positively and quickly. Speaking for their constituents, they contacted the radio station and announced that they were personally willing to accept a role in the facilitation with two conditions: they would first confer with the other members of the religious and civic facilitation teams, and they would establish specific guidelines for the facilitation. Later that day, the ruling party announced on the radio that it accepted the facilitation of the civic and religious community teams and that George Kabogo would participate in the dialogue on behalf of the ruling party. Soon after this announcement, Rev. Tumwini received a call with the news that Prof. Wakili would represent the Reform Party.

It was now dark outside and his colleagues had departed. As Joshua thought again about peace in his country, he returned to the time when he worked for a large civic association in the city and to his time as a student when the university was frequently closed. Surely multi-party democracy need not lead to civil war. There must be space for peace! Joshua then turned to the challenges he was facing. How could the emerging civic and religious leadership team work together to move beyond the bitter stalemate between the parties? He was also concerned that this sudden request for facilitation was a ploy by one or both parties to use the team to promote their own agenda.

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