FROM DETERRENCE TO COMMON SECURITY
A contribution to peace education

Karin Utas Carlsson, 3rd Dec. 2022, Stocken, Orust and 15th July -23 International People´s College Helsingør, Denmark

We have to do everything we can to stop the Ukrainian war and prevent a war between China and US. In Ukraine the nuclear powers confront each other. A coming world war will not be like the Second World War because of the nuclear weapons.

The weapons have been modernized and now one speaks without respect about "small nuclear weapons" although they are stronger than the Hiroshima bomb.

I believe that explicit and nonexplicit threat of nuclear assault is a contributing factor behind the Ukrainian war – through Russian fear of getting American nuclear weapons right up to the its border. Ukraine as a coming Nato-state was a red line to Russia, expressed since 2007. This war could have been prevented. We did not have leaders to stop the escalation. The way of thinking which has led us to the brink of nuclear catastrophe is of the kind that I will here call the power paradigm.

Notice period to decide whether a nuclear assault is real or a mistake would be down to 10 minutes. This is frightening. Ukraine cooperates closely with the nuclear power US and Nato, modern weapons are delivered in abundance to Ukraine. Finland has received membership in Nato and Sweden has applied for it, leaving the tiny bit of neutrality that was left.

Sweden means a threat to Russia when we join the enemy. As we know Russia – feeling all the more pressured by the Nato expansion to its boarders – invaded Ukraine on the 24th of February last year, and the consequences are horrible. We see suffering beyond imagination, Ukraine being bombed to rubble. Now Ukraine´s and Russia´s existence are at stake. Russia has threatened to use nuclear weapons if its security is threatened – and the world has not listened.

This is at stake
The war in Ukraine shows us that military deterrence does not work. To have and to threaten with nuclear weapons might start war rather than keeping it away. We have to think differently, prepare for peace and not war. If we do not do that we will all become victims sooner or later. Through mistake or conscious or unconscious escalation the first bomb will be brought to explode followed by probable retaliation. When there is no control, suffering will be immense, and our civilisation will be finally threatened. Simulations show that the result will be world hunger for years apart from deaths, sickness, and injuries.

All this is at stake, and negotiations are still not happening! We have to think anew and stop the war. Enormous sums are invested in arms, resources urgently
needed for the necessary change of society to stop the global warming and eradicate poverty.

There is talk of collective security, i.e. with likeminded AGAINST the enemy; Russia, or China, or… How can people believe that our security will be increased by finding enemies and spreading deadly weapons to war zones and the rest of the world? We have to return to Olof Palme´s concept Common security, which means that no one is safe if not all are safe. This is what Russia demanded and cried out for just a month before the irregular and horrific

invasion of Ukraine. However, the foreign minister Lavrov met with humiliation when he weeks before the invasion wrote to the foreign ministers of E U asking for a quick reply from each one of them, referring to exactly this which we could have recognized as common security. But politicians and media all turned a blind eye.

If we had listened, Russia would have been treated as an equal with the same yardstick. Imagine Kina or Russia building their bases in Mexico or Cuba. Remember the Cuba crisis in 1962 when the world was on the brink of nuclear disaster. To save our culture, humans, plants, and animals we have to apply knowledge of conflicts and how to handle conflicts peacefully.

Burton, the father of Human Needs Theory, who in 1964 in London founded the Centre for the Analysis of Conflict, showed that human needs have to be met to prevent violence and escalation of violence, that deterrence does not work, and that there are important similarities between conflicts at the micro and macro levels. Here is a core quotation by him: "Once one denies the traditional assumption about the social malleability of human nature, and asserts the existence of some human needs, that will be pursued regardless of circumstances and consequences, some important insights emerge into the nature of conflict, its resolution and prevention. Deterrence theory, the basis of domestic enforcement and international strategic policies, is undermined, because *deterrence cannot deter in conditions in which human needs are frustrated.*" (italics, mine, Burton 1990: Conflict. Resolution and Provention.)

Violence is regarded in accordance with the peace researcher Galtung as physical, psychic, structural, and cultural.

Burton differentiated between **the alternative A**, the traditional way of thinking, called "realpolitik" often power play, and **the alternative B**, a nonviolent, peaceful way. I have in my dissertation talked about a paradigm shift since the thinking is radically different and we can see tendencies in that direction. Burton was part of establishing the UN Charter proclaiming **Peace by peaceful means.**

Let us have a look at human needs and after that at escalation mechanisms
Physical needs: Food beverage, sleep, rest, right temperature, movement….
- Security
- Love and friendship
- Esteem needs and Identity
- Belongingness
- Meaning and Understanding
- Participation
- Justice

All the needs apart from the physical ones are psychosocial in nature. What is of special interest is that they are not limited, which means that the more you give, the more you get. **The cake can be increased.** This gives the opportunity of long-term conflict resolution, win-win instead of win-lose. What you do in conflict resolution is to look for underlying needs, values and concerns and differentiated these from means to meet them. Parties usually start by expressing what they want, not WHY they want it and what they need or value. **Marshall Rosenberg** has said that if people manage to express underlying needs he can easily help them to solve the problem.

Definition. There are many definitions of conflict. One is Galtung´s: Conflict is "incompatibility between goal states, or values held by actors in a social system". A somewhat different way is to explain it as parties´ needs being incompatible. At least one of them feels discomfort. They have then moved from simple disagreement. There is a value in a broad definition of conflict since it is easier to handle it early and thereby prevent destructive development.

Escalation of conflict show important similarities between the micro and macro levels
Let us have a look at the dynamic of escalation and reflect for a moment on examples of private conflicts and those at the macro/global level.

It often starts with **personification.** At least one of the parties moves from the issue to accusations. It might at first only be in thinking. Trust is torn apart as the escalation moves on. Negative expectations. The other party reacts. Counter attacks, accusations…

The conflict grows by people (maybe groups of people) being drawn into it, taking part. It also grows as more conflict areas develop. Negative feelings take over as well as negative expectations, attitudes and interpretations, self-fulfilling prophecies. Principles are at play. Enemy images are spread, and the distance between the parties increase – **polarisation.** You think in revenge and act accordingly. You remember the bad things. Alliances are founded, and this happens at an early stage – or are there from the beginning.

De-escalation might happen at any time but it gets harder as the trust is damaged. Good, konstructive conflict resolution is about acting fast.

Comparison between the power paradigm (alternative A) and the emerging paradigm paradigm (alternative B)

	The power paradigm (A)	The emerging paradigm (B)
View of conflicts	Conflicts are negative, bad, and should be avoided as far as possible. Narrow definition of conflict. Violence may be regarded as just physical violence. Conflict may be viewed as armed conflict only.	Conflicts are necessary for growth and life. A broad definition gives increased action preparedness. The handling of the conflict decides the outcome.
Unit of analysis	Nations, regions, institutions are in focus. Conflicts at the macro and micro levels are essentially separate. They are handled differently.	The individual and the identity group are the units of analysis. Basic needs of individuals are in focus. This applies also to groups. Conflicts at the micro and macro levels have many things in common. They are handled in accordance with the same principles.

Deterrence	Deterrence, threat, and coercion are used to reach goals. This is central to power politics and the defence of all countries, resulting in escalation of the conflict.	Deterrence, threat, and coercion do not work since it gives rise to resistance and trust is reduced. This way of thinking in security politics would give wonderful consequences: ***The idea of nuclear deterrence would be gone!***
Reason of conflict	Reasons of conflict are lack of resources and the aggressiveness of nations, groups and humans.	The core or the problem is that humans feel their basic needs are threatened. This decides how conflicts are handled and escalation is avoided. Basic needs such as security, recognition, belonging, and meaning. Herein lies the opportunity for win-win solutions.
Focus	Positions are stated. Declared issues are those on which settlement is sought, sometimes as a compromise. This without taking into account needs, values, and concerns.	*Underlying* needs, values, and concerns are sought through analysis of the situation. In particular fear and esteem needs/identity are taken into account.
View on the other party	The other party is looked upon as *adversary* or enemy	The other party is looked upon as partner in solving the conflict. The problem is separated from the person or groups of persons viewed as the other party.
Responsibility	The responsibility lies with the other party.	The responsibility is common. Common problem solving is looked for.
Contact with the other party	Contact may be broken. Breaking the contact is often used for pressure, for instance sanctions and blockades.	The contact is kept to solve the problem.
Different perspectives of the parties is looked for to solve the problem..	One´s own perspective is in focus. Solutions are quickly sought in accordance with one´s own thoughts and needs. Enemies are sought – or were there in advance. Thoughts of right and wrong, good and evil. Solutions are allowed to be short-term, temporary. Conflicts are "regulated."	The perspective of all parties are investigated and considered. The problem is analysed. Causes are sought. No thinking in terms of enemy. The person and the problem are separated. Solutions are to be long-term sustainable.
Aim	The aim is to win the conflict which is win-lose (zero-sum) in its outcome as there is scarcity of resources; what one wins the other loses. The starting point is one´s own needs and wishes and the	The aim is that the needs of all parties are met, win-win. Resources may be increased. Conflicts are potentially positive sum outcomes. The challenge is to achieve these. There are immaterial needs of no short supply. Both sides´ gratification of needs may grow simultaneously, for instance security, love, self-esteem, and belonging.

	analysis looks after one´s own perspective.	
Power	The outcome is based on power. There is a struggle for power. Power *over* (domination) Power is used to meet one´s own needs, resulting in power play. Escalation leads to more of the same methods. Win-lose may lead to lose-lose, especially in the long run.	The outcome is based on objective standards, also legal norms. Power *to…* Power *with* (the other) Power *over one´s self* (Gandhi) Reaching a mutual aim with the other party, a solution which is long-term sustainable. Power play is avoided. Nonviolent methods are used to solve the problem and make peace. Win-win. Trust and confidence are created.
Authority	There is a hierarchical structure where power comes from above.	Those in power are dependent on those who are governed. There is a bottom-up perspective. None is powerless since there is a reciprocity, a dependency both ways.

This way of thinking is very different from what is common today in traditional media and what most actors express. They cast suspicion on those who give the perspective of the other party (for instance the peace movement trying to balance the information). This is only too common in the view on Russia, Syria, North Korea and China. The war in Ukraine has shown this in abundance leading to a polarization of unknown dignity. The perspective of the other party is viewed upon as propaganda, while that of one´s own party is seen as the normal. This is an enormous problem which could prevented by insights of conflict resolution.

Advantage seeing the similarities between the micro and macro levels
The advocates of the power paradigm differentiate between the micro and macro levels while Alternative B takes the opposite view stressing the similarities. This is because they try to meet human needs avoiding power play by solving the problem in cooperation with the other party separating the person from the problem.

Empowerment
By recognising the similarities between the levels you get empowered as an individual to promote peace and solve conflicts constructively. You find your peace work where you are, discover that all is interrelated. We can live the life we want to see in the future, live peace where we are – and this at all levels, contributing to a less violent world.

A wealth of knowledge
In understanding and solving conflicts we can benefit from the knowledge of behaviour science. Together we must make media and politicians learn and implement the deep knowledge of conflicts: their causes, dynamics and handling that behaviour science has collected and developed through the centuries. *According to Alternative B the same principles work on the two levels.* Therefore there is a great potential in taking advantage of theoretical and practical knowledge from the local level to solve conflicts and promote peace at the global level.

Educational challenge
I hope my comparison between the two ways of thinking has shown that humanity needs education and training in conflict resolution to reduce violence of all kinds, and that

experience from the local level has potential to change security and foreign policy. The world is today in a very dangerous situation. Human existence it threatened. The traditional power paradigm dominating security policy has to be changed to create human security based on human needs. John Burton´s thinking is worth spreading. As someone said: "There is nothing as practical as a good theory".

See www.laraforfred.se – dissertation "Violence Prevention and Conflict Resolution…." see
www.tradet.org
k.utas.carlsson@gmail.com
I am thinking of founding "Burton´s Friends", en digital association to cross borders. **Let me know if you are interested!**
Karin Utas Carlsson