POST-MODERN CONFLICT, AID POLICY AND HUMANITARIAN CONDITIONALITY

A DISCUSSION PAPER

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THE LIMITS OF EVOLUTIONISM

Mainstream aid policy regards internal war as resulting from a combination of economic scarcity and institutional weakness. It is thought to be irrational and represents a breakdown of normal state structures and relations. The role of aid is to restore the balance upset by conflict and to re-establish harmony. In this manner, societies can be helped onto, or assisted to rejoin the path to liberal-democracy. The difficulty, however, is that this view appears to be contradicted by repeated reversals and setbacks. Part of the problem is the implicit evolutionism within aid policy. That is, when it looks at southern societies, rather than analysing actually existing conditions and relations, it sees an image of what these societies are supposed to become. Besides analysing the internal logic of aid policy, including the trend toward humanitarian conditionality, this discussion paper has attempted to construct an alternative model of post-modern transformation in the South. While still work in progress, it attempts to take account of evidence which aid policy either ignores or cannot reconcile.

POST-MODERN CONFLICT

Rather than abnormal events, so-called internal wars are analysed as extensions of the long-term and embedded social process that constitute everyday life. One such process that links both North and South is the changing nature of the nation-state. As a political project the nation-state reached its zenith during the decades immediately following WWII. Since the 1970s, under the effects of globalisation new supra and subnational intermediaries have emerged which have eroded and redefined nation-state competence. Government has been transformed into governance as decision making networks have been created linking international, regional, state and local actors. Reflecting a neomedievalism, multiple and overlapping sovereignties now exist side by side with weak or conditional forms of central authority. In both the North and the South new forms of inclusion and exclusion are changing spatial and social boundaries. While there are a number of similarities induced by globalisation, the opportunities open to northern and southern political rulers differ.

In the North, globalisation has encouraged the concentration of the conventional world economy into regionally defined productive systems. Arrangements of varying degrees of formality that help maintain competitive advantage and promote technological innovation. In contrast, in the South the conventional economy has contracted and increasingly been replaced by extra-legal parallel and semi-legal grey activities. While extremely significant, conventional indicators due not record such activity. Rather than promoting regional systems, the nature of political authority associated with such activities tends towards assertiveness and regional fragmentation. At the same time, it reflects the trend toward
multiple sovereignties and weak central competence. The political strategies that southern rulers have developed to manage the post-modern transition should not be regarded as abnormal or a form of breakdown. To the contrary, while often at a high social cost, the manner in which clientage networks are restructured in relation to changing parallel and international grey economic activity is innovative. Although these forms have often been associated with warlord entities, many juridical southern states have adopted such strategies.

The symbolic language of aid policy, especially that of privatisation and pluralism, articulates with the surface features of the post-modern transformation in the South. While satisfying northern creditors, privatisation has become an important means whereby southern rulers have restructured political authority. At the same time, state deconstruction has generally weakened existing property rights and legal norms. Where rulers have reconstructed juridical forms of state authority, which is the majority of cases, property rights and the rule of law often remain ill-defined. Although there are more private owners, state structures are unable to protect them. As a result, while the North is attempting to de-militarise following the end of the Cold War, a demand for private protection has been growing in the South. The stagnation of subsistence economies together with the demobilisation of Cold War security forces have created a manpower reserve for the privatisation of violence. Combined with the greying of the small-arms industry, this reserve has contributed to South’s rearming.

The changing nature of political, economic and juridical structure under the impact of globalisation has prompted an increase in so-called internal war in the South. This phenomenon frequently manifest itself in the shape of ethnic and identity politics. Explosive forms of social inclusion and exclusion can develop as new boundaries are drawn around resources and political claims. In such wars, people and their assets, even their cultural identities, can become both targets and walls of defence. Although they have structural origins in the changing nature of the state, such tendencies can also be reinforced by innovative rulers and political aspirants. That is, people able to exploit these emerging divisions and transform the not inconsiderable resources involved into a privately controlled war economy. It is important, however, that these structures are not seen as abnormal or separate from society as happens in aid policy. They reflect the long-term and embedded social processes of globalisation. As such, there are some general similarities between North and South. The governance gap within the emerging structures, however, is greater in the South. This means that the survival strategies of southern rulers can be pursued at a high and often brutal social cost. That is, creating the situations depicted by so-called complex emergencies. Despite this, for ruling authorities it can be seen as a viable adaptation to the effects of globalisation.

While the term internal war is popular, it is misleading. Although internal aspects of conflict are very important, it
tends to minimise the international dimensions of such instability. The South is being reintegrated into the North’s sphere of influence, both commercially and in terms of welfare provision, in new ways. At the same time, the term implies a conventional distinction between ‘war’ and ‘peace’. As an extension of the normal processes of social change, however, post-modern conflict challenges this view. It suggests that even if open conflict is absent, similar processes and relations are present as when war is raging. War and peace are relative concepts. They appear as different degrees of each other; as either a speeding up or slowing down, rather than the absolute and opposed stages of mainstream aid policy.

In this respect, war economies in the South have a good deal in common with peace economies. The post-modern war economy is distinct from traditional European form of such structures. That is, associated with central state control, autarchic economic production, mass social and political mobilisation, and the clear division of populations between fighting and productive service. The ‘total war’ of 1939-45 is a classic example. In contrast, a post-modern war economy is characterised by high levels of casual employment and unemployment, only partial forms of military mobilisation, a marked dependence on imports and external resources, weak public sector activity, and fragmented and decentralised administrations. A situation which describes the southern transformation generally. In other words, a looking-glass world in which opposites are interchangeable and what are thought to be distinct stages appear as different manifestations of the same thing.

The idea of post-modern transformation is preferable to the more common view of internal war. Post-modern, in this sense, implies conflict beyond the traditional confines of the nation-state. It is misleading to view the processes involved as a form of breakdown in relation to an ideal model of liberal-democracy. It also means that these strategies must be distinguished from those associated with traditional democratic and inclusive statist forms. Post-modern conflict is a new phenomenon. Rather than regarding it as a transitory phenomenon, its long-term implications need to be seriously considered.

The political and social consequences of post-modern conflict have become a main preoccupation of aid policy. There is a concern, however, that aid policy and its view of internal war is inadequate in relation to its object. At the same time, since practical responses flow from this understanding, these too may be compromised. The rest of the discussion paper analyses the assumptions and responses of aid policy.

EVOLUTIONISM AND INTERNAL WAR

In relation to conflict and social reconstruction, mainstream aid policy reflects the wider changes in development theory. Namely, its redefinition and a shift in focus from a concern with inequalities within the international system to the quality and character of domestic relations. In many
respects, development is now mainly concerned with changing internal behaviour and attitudes. Ideas such as the relief to development continuum reflect the trend toward internalisation. While the conception of a continuum has received some criticism, its central idea that relief should be more developmental has been very influential. It is argued, among other things, that in order to avoid fuelling war or creating dependency, relief operations should utilise local capacities and expertise. In other words, that relief itself, in the form of developmental relief, should contribute to, or at least complement, the process of capacity building.

From a conventional viewpoint, internal war is regarded as resulting from a combination of economic scarcity and institutional weakness. For example, weak states unable to mediate the competing demands arising from economic change, environmental degradation and population growth. At the same time, conflict itself is regarded as abnormal and separate from the customary workings of society. This conception of conflict complements the neo-liberal dichotomy between 'state' and 'civil society'. The latter has become the main focus of aid policy attempts to restore the balance and harmony disrupted by conflict. In this respect, developmental relief, with its emphasis on processes and institutions as opposed to people, is part of the growing importance of the idea of civil society for aid policy.

The merging of different strands within aid policy around the idea of civil society has been reinforced by a further drawing together. That is, the increasing blurring of development and transitional agendas. While usually associated with Africa and the European East, respectively, their key concepts appear increasingly interchangeable. Development has become associated with a strong civil society. At the same time, this is seen as vital for stability and the transition to liberal-democracy. The challenge for aid policy in both Africa and the European East has become the difficulties and setbacks in the movement toward liberal democracy. As a result of the ideological coalescence around a single evolutionist model, in terms of its responses, aid policy appears as an increasingly narrow range of activities.

THE EPIDEMIOLOGY OF INTERNAL WAR

While aid policy regards conflict as having its origins in economic scarcity and institutional weakness, to describe actual conflict it uses a socio-psychological model. This model reflects the assumption that conflict is irrational and somehow separate from society. Indeed, it lends itself to a medical analogy. That is, conflict as a form of disease that moves through states and if diagnosed early enough can be more easily cured.

Borrowing from evolutionist thinking, conflict is regarded as passing through various stages. While capable of different interpretation, these stages are usually seen in terms of escalation, stalemate and decline. Open conflict has localised beginnings and usually originates in ignorance,
misunderstandings or communication breakdowns. Small problems easily compound to form larger issues which heightening social divisions. Especially, for example, if there is history of ethnic competition or political entrepreneurs are actively creating differences. Once fighting set in, both sides actively strive for dominance. If an outright victory is not secured, a stalemate usually ensues. Gradually as more people realise that victory cannot be achieved, conflict declines and the warring parties become more receptive to seeking a resolution.

This model displays the main assumptions of aid policy in relation to conflict. That is, it is abnormal, separate from society and subject to evolutionist trends. Like a disease, moreover, it supports ideas associated with early warning and preventive actions. Compared to when positions have hardened, conflicts are seen as easier to resolve in their earlier stages. Such an idea is markedly different from that which holds that war and peace are relative concepts. Early warning moreover is premised on the idea that lack of information is the main factor mitigating against preventive action. Experience suggests, however, that the situation is more complex. Even when well informed, a response by northern governments is not a forgone conclusion. Moreover, the approach assumes a benign model of government in which political authority is synonymous with the public good. Contemporary authoritarianism, plus the equivocal and selective responses of northern governments to crises in the south, indicate that the issue in more complex.

In the final analysis, the approach of aid policy to internal war rests upon an assumption of functional harmony. It implicitly pictures a normal society as one in which resources are fairly distributed between its different and competing groups. Conflict destroys this balance. The role of aid intervention, therefore, is to restore the balance which conflict has upset. In this respect, the preferred response to conflict and post-conflict situations reflects the northern view of multiculturalism. That is, support for plural political institutions in combination with a range of projects aim at promoting integration.

**AID RESPONSES TO INTERNAL WAR**

The full implementation of aid policy has had to await the end of the Cold War. The profound change in international relations that resulted has allowed a veritable revolution in aid practice. Namely, the ability to work on all sides in an ongoing conflict or unresolved political crisis. During the Cold War, formal activities were restricted to recognised governments and the areas they controlled. Mainly on the basis of agreements with governments, opposition movements or warring parties, in some cases of a joint nature, aid agencies have secured humanitarian access to civilian populations. This same principle of negotiated access, however, is also applicable to civil institutions. For example, the role that external agencies have acquired in relation electoral support in Eastern Europe. This increase in formal access has seen a
huge expansion of aid agency and NGO activity. At the same
time, often supported by ad hoc UN Security Council
resolutions, the period as witnessed the growth of large-scale
integrated UN led emergency operations. These operations been
associated with the development of complex forms of welfare
and security sub-contracting.

Although it has been argued that the age of absolute
sovereignty is over, it still remains an important
institution. In relation to the South, however, one can see
the emergence of what could be called conditional sovereignty.
Reflecting similar processes in the North, it implies the
redefinition of state authority in relation to the
requirements of new supranational bodies and agencies. The
economic modalities of structural adjustment is one example.
This also extends to the demands of the new operational tools
that have developed as a result of negotiated access and more
integrated programming in relation to conflict and post-
conflict situations. At the same time, conditional
sovereignty has broadened the idea of government
responsibility.

The internalisation of aid policy has focused attention on the
character of domestic relations and institutions. While it is
recognised that in situations of internal war governments can
actually be part of the problem, within the new aid regime
they are also responsible for putting matters right. Aid has
increasingly become conditional on southern rulers providing a
secure environment or, especially in post-conflict situations,
support for plural political institutions. If such criteria
are met, depending on the situation aid agencies are able to
respond with developmental relief and integrative projects
centred on civil society.

The responses of aid policy derive directly from its
assumptions about conflict and the view that functional
harmony is the normal state of society. Although regarding
conflict as occurring in stages, practical responses have a
quality of sameness about them. In this respect, it is more
rewarding to unpack the implications of the socio-
psychological model of conflict employed. Responses fall into
two broad categories of ‘social’ and ‘psychological’.
Regarding the former, the functionalist theory of co-operative
integration is widespread. That is, the conviction that
measures which in someway bring people together will somehow
help resolve difficulties. This idea permeates all levels of
aid policy. It can be seen, for example, in relation to
negotiated access humanitarian programmes. During the early
1990s, it was widely believed that by providing a bridge
between warring parties, such programmes would themselves
promote reconciliation.

The main application of co-operative integration, however, has
been in relation to the projectisation of aid policy.
Development has increasingly been redefined as changing
behaviour and attitudes. Projects, in terms of the small-
scale resource redistribution implied, provide the structure
and incentives for co-operative integration. Projects are
designed to bring divided groups together in a variety of ways. Indeed, this logic is capable of endless replication. For example, projects in which opposed groups are encouraged to jointly manage a common resource; different groups produce separate aspects of the same commodity; staff are hired from opposed groups; linked projects operate among different groups; providing a service on condition that it is open to all groups; and so on. Despite the paternalism, if not racism, inherent in the logic of co-operative integration it is ubiquitous among aid agencies and heavily funded by northern governments.

Regarding psychology, the more direct forms of intervention mainly relate to training in conflict resolution techniques. To a large extent, such training is a concentrated expression of the assumption that conflict stems from ignorance and can be resolved through the logic of co-operative integration. Training sessions usually concentrate on such things as seeing the other point of view; showing how power 'with' is better than power 'against' scenarios; indicating means of creating a partnership atmosphere; and so on. If co-operative integration projects tend to be paternalistic, conflict resolution training treats both the perpetrators and victims of violence as the same. Since it is assumed that conflict is a result of ignorance or communication breakdown, in a sense, everyone is a victim. There is no contradiction therefore in that most of this training usually takes place with victims or otherwise vulnerable populations and not the most violent elements.

CONDITIONALITY AND HUMANITARIAN AID

During the Cold War relief and development were regarded as separate activities. At the same time, formally at least, humanitarian assistance was unconditional. This created a useful political sub-text which allowed Western governments to intervene in pro-Soviet countries that were otherwise barred from receiving development assistance. With the end of the Cold War and the merging of relief and development to form developmental relief, this situation has changed. The end of the superpower rivalry has given northern governments a new flexibility in relation to the South. At the same time, developmental relief means that situations that a decade ago were seen as emergencies are no regarded as opportunities for rehabilitation and development. Albeit largely indirect and informal, taken as a whole these developments reflect a growing conditionality with regard to humanitarian assistance.

Humanitarian aid has never been evenly applied. There is a marked disparity between per capita expenditure between programme that cannot be explained in terms of need. At the same time, there has been a creeping acceptance of response failure. Few UN emergency appeals, for example, reach their target figure. Around half the required amount being an average result. This has created a number of problems. Including accusations that aid agencies exaggerate in order to gain attention. At the same time, in the apparent absence of visible catastrophes following response failure, there is some
evidence of donor governments purposely under-responding so as to bring appeals down to their 'true' levels. At the moment, however, there is no accurate measure of the real effects of response failure.

The end of the Cold War has recast the political and geographical boundaries of what are strategic and non-strategic areas. Reflecting the process of regionalisation and differentiation within the global economy, instability in the South is increasingly viewed as a number of 'wars of choice' for northern governments. Involvement is increasingly dictated according to a new calculus of national, regional and strategic interest. The effects of this process can be seen, for example, in the differential northern response in the Balkans as compared to central Africa.

Developmental relief has contributed to the changing perception of the crisis. Attention has been shifted from people to processes and institutions. This has contributed to what could be called the disappearing beneficiary. That is, a tendency for the threshold of acceptable limits of suffering to increase over time. Although formal benchmarks have remained relatively stationary, the actual levels of wasting and malnutrition required to trigger a relief intervention increased during the 1980s. Reflecting this rising threshold, and needing to find ways of creating greater public impact, since the early 1990s, aid agencies have increasingly used crude mortality rates. A similar process of rising tolerance, however, can be observed. During the early part of 1997, for example, estimated mortality rates in the Hutu refugee camps in Eastern Zaire were the highest yet recorded. However, no intervention or public campaign comparable to what has been seen in the past was forthcoming.

The merging of relief and development has tended to fold humanitarian aid into the framework of development conditionality. Donor led rule-based systems governing rehabilitation assistance in unstable areas, for example, Somalia and Afghanistan, have increasingly functioned to make all aid dependent on ruler compliance over security and rights issues. While it might be difficult to provide humanitarian assistance in insecure conditions, the blurring of humanitarian aid with rehabilitation has reduced the political profile of decisions to withdraw aid. At the same time, such acts can now be blamed on ruler intransigence. In this situation one has to be careful that one set of rights or requirements in not being elevated to withdraw another.

These developments have great significance in relation to the changing fortunes of humanitarian assistance. The events of the last few years would suggest that the period of humanitarian interventionism that began with Band Aid in the mid 1980s has now peaked and may well be on the retreat. Even the role of the media, at one time often credited with forcing governments and aid agencies to respond whether they wanted to or not, seems more equivocal. This is the situation in which the potential for change must be examined.
STRATEGY FOR CHANGE

This analysis of aid policy is not meant as a contribution to conspiracy theory. The trends and forces described are inherent within the changing structure of the global political economy. While there is a tendency to produce certain outcomes, no specific agencies or agendas are driving the system. Nor, for that matter, are the positions of any of its actors predetermined or incontrovertible. The relations and structures involved are too complex for such mechanistic interpretations. Indeed, understanding and reacting against the tendencies inherent within the system should be an important aim of aid policy.

Theory is only as good as the information that it collects and interprets. At the same time, sound policy rests on a good foundation of understanding. At the moment we know little of the nature of the post-modern transformation since aid theory is largely geared to legal and state centred activities. An alternative aid policy is not possible without creating the basis for a different form of understanding. There are four main areas alternative information should be sort.

First, the rising threshold of tolerance needs to be properly documented. This in turn is related to the need to develop a more adequate and structural measure of social and political vulnerability. At present indicators such as UNDP’s human development indices are geared toward agency inputs.

Second, the nature of the post-modern transformation in the South remains illusive since conventional economic indicators give the impression of regions which are economy-less. Much more empirical and analytical attention needs to be devoted to parallel and grey economic networks. Not only to assess their significance but to understand more fully their mode of operation.

Third, aid policy regards conflict as abnormal and transitory. Therefore, there is a huge gap in terms of our understanding of war economies and, in particular, the political economies of warlords and so-called weak states. More research on the viability of these forms of adaptation is needed.

Fourth, the response of the North to crises in the South is not primarily determined by the amount or better information. Instead, we a better understanding of northern government decision making networks, how they operate and, in particular, what constitutes northern interest in the post-Cold War era.

More information in the above four areas will not, on its own, solve the problems of aid policy. It would, however, sufficiently broaden our understanding of the post-modern transformation in the South and to begin to define alternative policy responses. Policies, moreover, which would be more closely geared to the actual processes of transformation underway rather than an evolutionist image of what societies are expected to become.
1. INTRODUCTION: THE LIMITS OF EVOLUTIONISM

When opposition to Albania’s Berisha regime broke into open revolt in February this year, Western policy makers were placed on the spot. Apparently convinced by the regime’s outward claim to liberal-democracy, and seeing Berisha as a strongman in a volatile region, Albania had received the highest per capita level of EU assistance of any Eastern European country (Vickers, 1997 March 5). Despite this level of involvement, however, the West seemed unwilling to acknowledge what most Albanians experienced. That is, a democratic veneer that barely concealed growing official corruption and the continuing decay of Albania’s infrastructure. As the revolt deepened, to many commentators the EU’s response was feeble and unfocussed.

... Albania showed the EU’s lack of preparation for such crises. It was a classic European crisis of the post-Cold war era - too far from the United States for the US to take an immediate interest, too close to Europe for us to ignore it (Smith, March 9).

Once the illusion of Albanian democracy had been challenged, the lack of alternative ideas within the EU gave the impression of politicians bonded by little more than the fear of a mass exodus of destitute refugees. At a time when the alleged UN success in restoring Cambodian democracy looks to be unravelling, together with setbacks in Sierra Leone, it is worth being reminded that Albania is not the first time that the West’s understanding and desired outcomes have fallen short of events. A spectacular example, perhaps among the greatest of the twentieth century, being the failure of Western policy makers and area specialist to predict the rapid demise of communist rule in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union (Verdery, 1996: 19). Problems with analysing situations, however, is not the only difficulty facing Western policy. The experience of the 1994 Rwandan genocide, an event also of historic proportions, adds a different dimension. Even when appraised of the situation and its likely outcome, Western governments and the UN failed to act until it was too late (Adelman, et al, 1996). Taken together, such events reflect both the malaise within aid policy and its complexity.

This discussion paper concerns the emerging political formations in the South and the changing nature of humanitarian assistance, including its growing conditionality. In examining these broad but related issues the paper notes that aid policy has changed significantly within the past couple of decades. If one could summarise these changes, it would be to suggest that with the demise of other political projects, namely, Third Worldism and Socialism, aid policy has tended to become narrower. An earlier preoccupation with inequalities within the international system has give way to an increasing focus on the character of domestic relations and institutions. Rather than a process of resource transfer, development now seems more concerned with changing behaviour and attitudes. Reflecting this, relief and development have
blurred to form developmental relief. As a result, humanitarian assistance, like development generally, has shifted its focus from people toward processes and institutions.

Within aid policy civil society has become a key concept and focus of attention. This has allowed a merging of development and transitional agendas. While associated with Africa and the European East respectively, their key concepts are interchangeable. The aim of development is to encourage a strong civil society. An effective civil society is also vital for the transition to liberal-democracy. In both cases, aid policy implies an evolutionist future. Rather than analysing actual relations, it substitutes an image of what societies are supposed to become. Such mergers and associations are well represented, for example, in the DAC Guideline on Conflict, Peace and Development Co-operation (1997) which have recently been endorsed by OECD governments.

The narrowing of aid policy is somewhat paradoxical. It has occurred at a time when operational instruments, including complex forms of subcontracting for welfare and security services, have increased. What this narrowing has done, however, is direct attention to the theory or assumptions that underpin aid policy and hence shape its responses. It is the concern of this discussion paper that mainstream aid policy suffers significant limitations. This can be seen, for example, in its understanding of conflict. Aid theory, however, is not a purely academic entity. This paper adopts the view that theory is a social construct and is intimately connected with the historical conditions that produced it. Theory always exists for some designated purpose, or to be used by specific people. Following the political economist Robert Cox (1995), one can distinguish two types of theory. That is, "problem-solving theory" and "critical theory".

...'problem-solving theory' takes the world as given (and on the whole good) and provides guidance to correct dysfunctions or specific problems that arise within this existing order. The other kind of theory, which I shall call 'critical' (although I do not thereby affiliate with any particular tendencies that have heretofore adopted that word) is concerned with how the existing order came into being and what the possibilities are for change in that order (Cox, 1995: 31-32).

Problem-solving theory is essentially concerned with maintaining existing structures. Critical theory on the other hand is concerned with the potential for structural change and the strategies that can effect change. Aid policy is an example of problem-solving theory. It conceives the thinking subject as external to the developmental object that it views (internal war, democratisation, etc). The role of problem-solving theory is to approximate the object. The better the theory the closer the approximation. The closer the approximation the better the technical aid responses that ensue. It is an approach well reflected in the mechanical world of logical-frameworks. The problem for mainstream aid
policy, however, is that the theory on which it is based can be argued to be inadequate. It does not really tell us much about conflict, yet its assumptions now constitute a central part of aid policy. Resulting from economic scarcity and institutional weakness, internal war is seen as breakdown of normal state structures and relations. It is essentially abnormal and irrational. The role of aid is to variously restore the balance upset by conflict, to re-establish harmony and place the societies concerned on the path to liberal-democracy. The scarcity view of conflict is complemented by an implicitly functionalist and evolutionist policy framework. The difficulty is that actually existing development, as indicated in the above Albania example, constantly seems to undermine this view.

Critical theory establishes a different set of assumptions. In distinction to aid policy, however, these consciously mock its implicit evolutionism. Rather than a breakdown, post-modern conflict is regarded as something new. Although pursued at a high social cost, it is symptomatic of innovative political strategies pursued by southern rulers. Rather than economic scarcity, as the conventional global economy retreats into northern regional systems, it has been responsible for the expansion of parallel and grey economic networks in the South. Seeing intra-state conflict in relation to globalisation, especially the reconstruction of state authority in relation to new supra and subnational intermediaries, gives such conflict a contemporary feel. As work in progress, this paper has attempted to elaborate a theory of post-modern transformation as an alternative to conventional wisdom. This alternative is then set beside that of aid policy and its derived responses, including the growing conditionality of humanitarian assistance. The conclusion reviews the possibilities for change.

1.1 STRUCTURE OF THE DISCUSSION PAPER

Section Two outlines a theory of post-modern conflict. In order to escape evolutionist thinking, it makes use of the neomedieval metaphor. That is, globalisation as denoting the emergence of new supra and subnational intermediaries that have eroded nation state competence. Multiple and overlapping sovereignties have emerged in the context of weak central authority. Section Three examines the conventional view of internal war. That is, as rooted in scarcity and institutional weakness. Section Four looks more closely at the socio-psychological model that informs aid policy. In particular, the view of conflict as a form of disease which goes through stages. Section Five examines the aid responses that are derived from this theory. That is, the functionalist theory of co-operative integration. Section Six looks at the issue of humanitarian aid and conditionality. While formally remaining unconditional, it is argued that in practice humanitarian assistance has become increasingly conditional. Finally, Section Seven suggests an alternative research agenda in relation to developing the policy implications of the post-modern transformation.
2. POST-MODERN CONFLICT

The strategies and tactics represented in the reshaping of state and political authority discussed below have been directly responsible for the displacement, exile and death of millions of people since the 1980s. They are the conscious engine of untold abuse and suffering. Some countries and regions have, quite literally, been decimated. In discussing this process of political transformation and attempting to describe its utility for the rulers concerned, to a large extent one is forced to lay its social consequences aside. The alternative would be either an endless repetition of ensuing misery, or through moral disgust forfeit an understanding of the transformation's structural and embedded characteristics. I have therefore chosen to emphasise the outcomes here and proceed on the assumption that the reader understands exactly what the stakes are.

2.1 CHANGING PERCEPTIONS

The prior assumptions and expectations that we hold about a particular issue or subject are very important. To a large extent they influence our views and shape what we do. This can happen even when experience may suggest something different. Once a dog has a bad name, it tends to keep it. Throughout this discussion paper, the need to review our assumptions and consider alternative viewpoints is a recurrent theme. It is not so much that we lack evidence, this will always be the case, it is the way that existing ideas and texts are thought about and ordered which counts. Conflict is one such issue were assumptions play a significant role. As Keen (1996, Spring) has pointed out, for most people war is essentially confusing and pointless. It is rather like, ...

...an outsider arriving at a sporting event whose first question is: 'Who's it between?' Such analysts may be quickly reassured with a set of competing initials (for example, UNITA versus the MPLA) or a set of competing ethnic groups (the Serbs versus the Muslims). It is not always clear, however, that the roots of conflict have been illuminated in such dialogue (Ibid: 23).

Seeing war as pointless tends, from the outset, to influence one's likely views and responses. The approach that Keen has developed is based upon a different set of assumptions. It challenges us to think of conflict as having a reason and serving a purpose. War is not an irrational or abnormal event somehow separate from the workings of everyday life. It becomes an a reflection and extension of these processes.

Part of the problem is that we tend to regard conflict as, simply, a breakdown in a particular system, rather than as the emergence of another, alternative system of profit and power (Keen, 1996, January: 14).

This orientation is echoed in the work of Reno (1995) on West Africa. Concerning the economic and political strategies
pursued by Charles Taylor in Liberia during the first part of the 1990s, we are asked not to prejudge these in a regressive light. That is, as a predatory response to a shrinking resource base in the context of a weak and decaying state. If one sets aside the coercive methods involved, to the contrary, they can be presented as new and innovative ways of projecting political power. At the same time, given the difficulties which Taylor faced, they were successful.

Does this transformed patrimonialism represent a new kind of state, an alternative institutionalisation of sovereign authority capable of defending itself and doing things without significant bureaucracies? (Ibid: 109)

The need to redefine our expectations of conflict has to be set against the character of modern warfare. As is often remarked, most conflicts and protracted political crises today are occurring within rather than between states (Gantzel, 1997). Moreover, compared to intra-state conflicts, these so-called internal wars are often characterised by their longevity and protracted nature. As more countries have been affected by this type of instability, internal wars and their consequences have come to occupy a prominent position within aid policy (World Bank, 1997). Indeed, they have become a major development challenge as societies have been set back and limited donor funding put under further strain.

...helping strengthen the capacity of a society to manage conflict without violence must be seen as a foundation for sustainable development (DAC, 1997 May: 1).

The idea of internal conflict not only implies a changing location of political violence in relation to the nation-state, its relative informality suggests that its organisational forms and borders are also shifting. As militia groups replace regular armies, and internal wars transmute into protracted crises, the boundaries between such things as war, crime and peace appear increasingly vague and blurred (Keen, 1996, Spring). In a looking-glass world, opposites become interchangeable and what should be distinct stages appear as different manifestations of the same thing.

Contrary to conventional wisdom, if we wish to examine conflict we must begin by analysing what is normal. Or at least, those long-term and embedded social processes that define the conditions of everyday life. The purpose and reasons for conflict are located in these processes. From this perspective, political violence is not different, apart or irrational in relation to the way we live. To the contrary, it is an expression of its inner logic.

2.2 GLOBALISATION AND THE NATION-STATE

The main factor within the present transformation that defines the way people live in both the North and South is the

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1 In terms of the scope of this discussion paper, this generally refers to Western Europe in relation to Africa, Eastern Europe and the former Soviet
changing nature of the nation-state. The modern nation-state emerged in the transition from feudalism to capitalism. After centuries of growth, change and periodic setback, it is regarded as reaching its apogee, at least in the West, during the so-called 'golden age' of world capitalism from the end of World War II until the early 1970s (Hopkins and Wallerstien, 1996). While exceptions and differences in depth existed, the tone of this period was one of nation-state competence and effectiveness. It was a time of comprehensive welfare provision, macro-economic management, government regulation and social engineering to combat public ills: the victory of modernity. Moreover, this development was not confined to the market economies. The socialist party-states of the Second World, although contested in places, reached the peak of their performance and legitimacy (Arrighi: 1991). As for the Third World, the statist model of development also reigned supreme. Even the national liberation struggles of the period did not seek to abolish the nation-state. The task was to replace its occupants and create a more equitable and just 'peoples' state. Perhaps with a hint of nostalgia, it is tempting to look back and observe,

...the state everywhere expanded, expansive, and in its full glory. The long-term process of state formation and state expansion appeared to culminate in an unprecedented triumph. The whole globe was covered in sovereign states, and these appeared to be working in a quite satisfactory manner. For the first time there where almost no merely 'nominal governments' that could rule outside the capital cities only thanks to the support of local non-state and parastatal authorities (warlords, strongmen, sheikhs, tribal chiefs) (Derlugian, 1996: 159).

In retrospect, this triumph appears to have been short-lived. A mere several decades at the end of a long and halting formative period. From the early 1970s, the competence of the nation-state began to erode. Ten years later it would be widely accepted has having reached the limits of its abilities to manage social and economic change (Ibid: 170). While definitions remain contested, the concept of globalisation has been widely used to explain this change. In its more literal interpretation, economic deregulation and the growing influence of markets has reduced the power and legitimacy of nation-states. An increasingly homogenous global economy is exerting a strong levelling effect on culture and society (Waters, 1995). Critics of this literal view have argued that the global economy today is no more open than it was a century ago (Hirst and Thompson, 1995). At the same time, countervailing pressures have emerged which means that globalisation is not simply associated with homogenisation.

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2 While world-system theory can help periodisation, one of its many weaknesses is that it cannot adequately account for the rise of East Asia to become one the world's main transnational regional systems. The special position of East Asia also broadly confines this discussion paper to West Europe and what could be called its historic and strategic hinterland (fn. 1).
To the contrary, it is building on earlier interconnections by creating powerful processes of inclusion and exclusion which are shaping new social and spatial boundaries. If globalisation has a meaning, it is a complex one in which, rather than homogenisation, its most important aspects are associated with emerging forms of differentiation, discontinuity and fragmentation.

In both the North and the South, globalisation is changing the architecture of the nation-state and the nature of political authority. New pressures and influences are arising at both supranational and subnational levels (Morss, 1991). While sovereignty has not been eliminated, it has been qualified in important ways. In this respect, a number of broad North-South similarities can be described. The previous comparative advantage of the nation-state has been undermined in two ways. These relate to what Cerny (1997) has called its multitasking capabilities and its ability to make side payments. Regarding multitasking, the state's public and economic competence has been eroded prompting the emergence of new actors and intermediaries. In relation to supranational intermediaries, not only has the significance of deregulated markets and international commercial networks increased, so has the influence of inter-governmental organisations (IGOs), international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and regional bodies. At the subnational level, processes of privatisation and localisation have weakened state monopolies and, among other things, have seen the voluntary and NGO sector become an important welfare provider. At the same time, single issue and identity politics have grown at the expense of formal parties.

The question of side payments relates to the ability of state actors to effectively maintain the provision of public goods and international commitments. This is especially the case in relation to economic planning and redistributive measures. Increasing difficulties in this area has undermined state legitimacy. This has declined at the same time as new supranational and subnational actors and intermediaries have become part of the political decision making process (Demirovic, 1996). Such pressures and changes have resulted in the emergence of complex cross-cutting linkages between the various levels and sectors of the new system, and among its state and non-state actors. Political authority is now increasingly multileveled and, compared to the nation-state ideal, asymmetrical. The growing importance of networks and cross-cutting linkages denote a move from government to governance. As a result, the political decision making process has become more polyarchical. That is, hierarchical patterns of negotiation and decision-making are replaced by co-operative network like types of negotiation and bargaining (Ibid: 4).

Owing to the reduced accountability within such a system, it has prompted the emergence of what Cerny has called a "governance gap" between rulers and ruled (1997: 3). While most graphically expressed in the South, this gap helps
explain why the general standing of politicians and the legitimacy of states is presently at a low ebb.

2.3 THE NEOMEDIEVAL METAPHOR

Regarding the need to change our assumptions in an attempt to find new ways to look at the world we live in, one of the most challenging alternative viewpoints is that of neomedievalism (Cerny, 1997; Deibert, 1997; Verdery, 1996). The idea of neomedievalism is, of course, a metaphor. In no sense is the world going backwards. At the same time, the feudal period existed in a localised rather than a globalised environment. It is a way of thinking about the present situation. A tool that provides a number of insights that the implicit evolutionism of conventional aid policy cannot.

Using the neomedieval metaphor, Cerny (1997) has described the present system of global governance linking North and South. There are two main considerations. First, nation-states have been transformed into enforcement agencies for decisions made at other levels within the globalised system. Second, due to the governance gap in the move from hierarchical to polyarchical decision making networks, the system as a whole is increasingly incapable of creating effective and multifunctional co-ordination mechanisms. As government has been replaced by governance, the ability to reach collective decisions or agreements has diminished. This, Cerny argues, leads to "entropy" within the system. Reaching global agreement on key social, economic and environmental issues becomes illusive. This entropy is reinforced by the absence of a real or sustained external threat. Short of intergalactic warfare, or the futurology of culture clash (Huntington, 1997), Northern governance structures lack a creditable outside enemy. Reflecting the implicit triumphalism of the liberal-democratic project, all problems now appear as internal ones. That is, as problems of civil society or psychological makeup (Duffield, 1997). This increases the difficult of achieving international consensus.

In this form, the idea of entropy is a useful comment on the present state of aid policy. This not only relates to the increasing problem of achieving its goals, as indicated in the continuing widening of wealth gaps and the worsening scenario for the world environment. It is also suggested, for example, in the post-Cold War pattern of humanitarian intervention in the South. Not only is this largely ad hoc and yet to achieve any consensus in terms of criteria or standards, it is has been widely criticised as substituting humanitarian aid for concerted international political action (Higgins, 1993; Duffield, 1994 Oct). As a lowest common denominator, and ultimately being debased in the process, humanitarian aid is one of the few things that most of the Western governments,

3 Neomedievalism should be distinguished from 'new barbarism' as reflected, for example, in the work of Kaplan (1994). This understands conflict in terms of a resurfacing of innate and age-old cultural hostilities. Neomedievalism, however is a metaphor for certain characteristics of contemporary social and political systems.
IGOs and NGOs can agree on. As the world differentiates into strategic and non-strategic areas (Freedman, 1995), however, even humanitarian aid is being increasingly unevenly applied.

The loss of nation-state autonomy, coupled with entropy, suggests an international system that, following Cerny (1997), is once again characterised by:

- competing institutions and overlapping jurisdictions of both state, non-governmental and private interest groups
- more fluid territorial boundaries both within and across states
- the increasing inequality and isolation of various underclasses and marginalised groups.
- the growing importance of identity politics, ethnicity and multiple and fragmented loyalties
- contested property rights legal statutes and conventions
- the spread of geographical and social 'no go areas' where the rule of law does not extend
- a growing disarticulation between the economically dynamic and technologically innovative northern regional systems and those areas outside

For Cerny (1997), the disparate and differentiated elements of this system combine together in a long-term “durable disorder”. That is, neither being able to solve ‘root causes’ nor, at the same time, allow total collapse.

So far, the discussion has focused on general similarities or linkages regarding the manner in which nation-state authority is transforming globally, that is, in both the North and the South. While there are a few exceptions, the North, however, is not characterised by the types of internal war and protracted armed crises that we see in the South. Notwithstanding the increasing problems of social marginalisation and lawlessness in the North, the trend there has been toward integrative regional networks and systems. In contrast, for the South political assertiveness, separatism and regional fragmentation persist. In order to understand this difference, we need to establish the divergent opportunities which globalisation has created for northern and southern rulers.

2.4 GLOBAL INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION

At an international level, rather than producing an unqualified and homogenous world economy, globalisation has encouraged a process of differentiation and regionalisation. This denotes the emergence of transnational regions where states are linked by cross-cutting economic agreements and instruments, and multilevel linkages between supra and subnational institutions. Contemporary regionalisation can be
seen as one attempt by northern leaders to compensate for the declining multitasking and side payment competence of nation-states. The three main regional systems or the so-called triad, are those centred on the North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA), the European Union (EU) and together with the more ad hoc regional arrangements among the burgeoning economies of East Asia. The multilevel and cross-cutting arrangements linking supra-national, national and sub-national entities within the main regional systems are markedly different. The EU, for example, is the oldest of these blocs. Perhaps reflecting this status, it is the only one that has attempted to establish a regional quasi-state based on horizontal integration. That is, admitting members and deepening integration on the principle of comparable economic performance.

The newer blocs have followed a different approach. This can be seen, for example, in relation to the East Asian regional arrangements. Rather than horizontal integration, these are attempting to exploit the skill and resource differentiation both within states and between them. Here pragmatic and localised agreements between nation-states aim at bringing different actors and resources together on the basis of vertical integration (Duffield, 1990). The financial, research and development and management skills of one country, for example, can by used to exploit the natural resources and labour power of another (Parsonage, 1992). A different way of looking at this is the EU is attempting to organise the parameters of market competition. In East Asia, however, transnational regional arrangements are changing market structures (Morales, 1992). Together they represent competing models of capitalism which are shaping the direction and future of the global economy.

While the linkages and arrangements within northern regional systems differ, there are a number of general similarities. These relate to the erosion of nation-state competence in the face of economic deregulation, increased market competition and growing business risk. As a result of such pressures there has been a merging of interests between companies and states. Reflecting this, for example, the activities of transnational companies (TNCs) have tended to become more fragmented and associated with regional productive systems (Ibid). In order to assist companies maintain technological competitiveness, governments have increasingly helped in forming alliances between internal and external productive forces. Such alliances help to reduce risks and spread research and development costs. At the same time, the emergence of flexible and 'just-in-time' manufacturing methods has encouraged regional productive systems and product differentiation. The result is that most northern companies now reach the global market through regional alliances and joint ventures.

Since the 1970s, the conventional global economy (that is, regulated by laws, measurable and can be audited) has tended to concentrate within and between the main transnational regional systems (UNCTC, 1991). A good example of this trend
concerns EU economic activity. The Lome' Conventions established in 1975 aimed at creating preferential economic arrangements between the EU and its developing African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) partners. Despite improved access, however, the ACP share of EU imports fell from 6.7% in 1976 to just 2.8% in 1994 (Brown, 1997). EU exports follow a similar pattern. At the same time, EU trade with Asia has trebled. This process of concentration is also suggested in the figures on global income distribution. Over the past thirty years the ratio of income held by the richest fifth of the world's population compared to the poorest has doubled from 30:1 to 61:1 (UNDP, 1996). The areas where conventional economic activity has decreased (in terms of median indicators) are those that lie outside the main transnational regions. That is, Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, the Middle East, Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. According to UN figures over a quarter of the world's population now have incomes that are lower today than ten or even twenty years ago. While reflecting northern concentration, such assertions do not mean that the South has somehow become economy-less. They are indicative of the extent to which economic activity has been informalised (Tabak, 1996) and, as such, is beyond official measurement.

This discussion has implications regarding how southern rulers and political aspirants have faced the global problem of the changing architecture of the nation-state. Globalisation and the contraction of conventional economic activity within northern regional systems has intensified the problems of state transformation in the South. Compared to northern rulers, Southern political actors lack the ability to retain an expanding conventional economy linked to regional production systems. Even with these advantages, however, northern rulers have so far failed to solve the problem of growing inequality and social insecurity in their own countries.

It is in this respect that we need to change our assumptions and expectations regarding internal war and protracted crisis. Southern rulers lack the benefits of northern rulers and many are having to contend with a contracting conventional economy at the same time as declining development assistance. Southern rulers, in facing the shared problems of globalisation and eroding state competence, have had to devise adaptive and innovative strategies for survival. They have forged new alliances with international and national actors, at the same time as developing illegal parallel and semi-legal grey economic activities that link and support these evolving clientage networks. This has given rise to two distinct patterns of regional dynamics. In the North, processes of integration are taking place. In the South, however, separatist and politically assertive formations are evolving. Writing in relation to the Balkans, Bojici et al (1995) observe that,

...despite being geographically the south-eastern flank of Europe, [it] manifests a profound marginalisation and
fragmentation, which has gone on in parallel with the process of integration in the European core (Ibid: 10).

In relation to southern separatist tendencies, the governance gap inherent within globalisation achieves a new importance. Parallel activities often involve the coercion or control of populations and the expropriation of their assets (Duffield, 1994). Such ruler survival strategies not only challenge the conventional association between government and the public interest, they can exact a high social cost. A situation expressed in the image of so-called complex emergencies. Similar processes of inclusion and exclusion, and the formation of new spatial and social boundaries are taking place in the North. In the South, however, these trends can have a far more violent and explosive expression.

2.5 THE DEMISE OF ALTERNATIVE MODERNIST PROJECTS

It is something of a paradox that it was the end of the 'golden age' of Western capitalism in the early 1970s, that set in train the re-establishment of Western influence in both Africa, Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union (unless specified, hereafter collectively termed the European East). In the case of the former as a return after a temporary slackening during the early post-colonial period. Regarding the latter, as a rekindling of relations following a period of socialist autarchy. The engine of this change was the attraction of Western credit followed by the taskmaster of debt. By the 1970s, the attempts by African and socialist party-states to chart independent paths of modernisation were coming under increasing strain in relation to the tremendous advances in the West during the early post-war decades. The OPEC induced energy crisis in the early 1970s served to slow down the overall rate of global economic expansion. At the same time, however, it also left Western banks sitting on a growing mountain of petro-dollars which they were happy to lend.

In many parts of Africa, borrowing money became one way of attempting to address the eroding multitasking and side payment competence of the state. A common response to the declining terms of trade for primary produce was to mechanise and intensify agricultural production (Duffield, 1991). Economies that had been largely geared to internal consumption became increasingly externally orientated. At the same time, property rights, especially in relation to land came under increasing strain. Regarding the party-states of the European East, by the 1970s, they too were experiencing the weaknesses and rigidities of 'actually existing socialism' (Bahro, 1978). While the need for reform was well known, taking Western loans became a widespread means of attempting to delay or put off this process (Verdery, 1996). As loans turned to debts during the 1980s, few of the original problems for which the debts had been incurred had been solved. Indeed, they had deepened. The ensuing crisis in both African and the European East resulted in the loss of economic sovereignty through the growing ability of the West to insist on structural adjustment programmes (Walton and Seddon, 1994). By the end of the
1980s, this movement had been formalised as political conditionality (ODI, 1992). That is, the tying of development aid to progress in economic liberalisation and support of democratic institutions.

That the OPEC induced energy crisis helped generate the loans which eventually fed into structural adjustment is somewhat ironic. The energy crisis itself was the beginning of the end of Third Worldism. That is, a political project which saw underdevelopment in the South as a function of the development of the North (Frank, 1967) and, through the reform of trade relations, attempted to redress this situation. The ultimately unsuccessful mid 1970s demands for a New International Economic Order (NEIO), for example, reflected this approach (Adams, 1993). The breakaway of East Asia, and its taking on the West at its own game, saw an increasing inward orientation among the remaining Third World countries under the pressures of structural adjustment. Debt financing replacing attempts to reform the international trading system.

While unsuccessful, the attempt to establish a NIEO, however, did have an impact in the North. It helped unleash a new wave of technological innovation which would increase further the distance between it and the South. A synthetics revolution in manufacturing, for example, together with declining build quality, has significantly reduced the dependence of northern industries on southern raw materials (Kaounides, 1990). Increasingly, Africa has been reintegrated into the world economy in terms of being a specialist supplier of high value minerals or niche tropical products. Regarding the European East, with economies having some similarities with the so-called Fordist period of mass manufacturing which the North was leaving behind, the postponement of reform only served to heighten the problems of actually existing socialism. In the face of the West's technological revolution and 'just-in-time' production methods, the planned economies were increasingly anachronistic. Soon, Africa would be producing raw materials that few countries needed, while the European East was manufacturing commodities that no one desired.

By the early 1980s, Third Worldism was already a spent force. Within less than a decade, the same was true of the socialist party-state. The demise of both of these alternative modernist projects, that is, having the state as their main agent, was a precondition for increased globalisation. For the rulers in the new South, this demise has demanded new and innovative responses.

2.6 ADAPTIVE PATRIMONIALISM

2.6.1 Abandoning Evolutionism

In relation to the South conventional aid policy implicitly adopts an evolutionist or teleological approach. While Africa is regarded as faced with a development challenge, the European East has to tackle that of transition. Aid practitioners often regard these as separate conditions of becoming. Globalisation pressures, structural adjustment and
aid conditionality, however, have tended to merge these agendas. In the last analysis, the South in general is regarded as progressing, albeit often haltingly, toward liberal-democracy. Encouraging privatisation, market reform and the creation of democratic institutions are central to this transformation. However, the evolutionist assumption about the nature of southern transformation has a number of limitations. For example, it tends to ignore or minimise the discontinuities and exclusionist processes that globalisation has encouraged. Moreover, rather than examining what exists and what southern rulers are actually doing, it makes do with an image of what these societies ought to be, or what should become. Developments are then viewed in relation to the desired teleological trajectory. Election irregularities in the European East, for example, are signs of the immaturity of the democracies concerned (Guerra, 1996). Something which will disappear as the habits of the socialist past die out.

There is a need to question such assumptions and expectations. In addressing this point, Verdery (1996) has suggested a different supposition in relation to the European East. One which consciously mocks the idea of evolutionary stages and teleological progression. Pursuing the neomedieval metaphor, instead of thinking of a transition to liberal-democracy, she postulates a "transition to feudalism" (Ibid: 204-228). A similar imagery informs the work of Schierup (1992; 1997) on the break-up of Yugoslavia. Here, we are asked to consider the crisis as a form of "re-traditionalisation" of contemporary social and political relations. Concerning Africa, Reno (1995) and Ellis (1995) have argued that warlord structures, both in their relation to foreign companies and dependent civilians, have established patterns of political authority reminiscent of the pre-colonial chieftancy system. These authors evoke such post-modern 'back to the future' images to counter the evolutionist limitations and implicit triumphalism of conventional aid policy. At the same time, these alternative assumptions suggest the possibility that southern rulers may be adapting the new globalised system to suit their own capabilities and interests. Innovations which imply that the movement toward liberal-democracy cannot be taken for granted.

2.6.2 From Nation-States to Multiple Sovereignties

Both the post-colonial African state and the socialist party-state can be argued to based political authority on forms of patronage and clientage In Africa,

Incorporation of existing authorities, manipulation of informal networks and intermediaries have held together African regimes in settings of weak legitimacy an economic scarcity since the start to the colonial era (Reno, 1995 April: 7).

Colonial rule frequently made use of local strongmen. Such people could exercise power through access to state resources and patronage. The British system of Native Administration, or indirect rule through local chieftancy systems is an
example. While not abolishing this system, at least immediately, independence and the expansion of state bureaucracies, introduced new tensions. That is, between state bureaucracies and local strongmen: the forces of modernisation and tradition. Apart from sources of patronage and gain, state bureaucracies could also become bases of political opposition to rulers. Such rulers were often forced to choose between satisfying popular social demands, and hence building political legitimacy, or managing political threats within the state bureaucracies and from strongman opposition. Cold war rivalry, together with borrowing, created additional resources which rulers could use to service client networks. At the same time, however, as Reno points out (1966: 4), the temptation is to decimate bureaucracies. Both as a means of limiting opposition or diverting funds into the political struggle. Regarding the latter, social and welfare spending and hence legitimacy has often been the first target of weak state rulers.

Concerning the socialist party-states, contrary to the popular conception of totalitarianism, such states can now be seen as comparatively weak and, like Africa, also suffering from continual crises of legitimacy. The nature of socialist production contained a number inherent tensions and contradictions. Contrary to capitalism's inner logic to maximise profits and promote consumerism, central planning encouraged different trends. That is, the hoarding of materials by the managers of enterprises in order to increase their bargaining power with other units and the state. In consequence, people endured erratic supplies and endemic shortages. Relations of clientage between managers and consumers, together with hoarding to increasing bargaining power were factors that undercut central party control (Verdery, 1996: 22-23).

At the same time, similar weaknesses affected vertical power relations. Socialist production with its pervasive shortages bred an oppositional consciousness among workers. The typical response of the party was twofold. First, the development of an extensive machinery of surveillance. Second, and more positively, through social spending and redistribution the attempt to actualise the paternalistic socialist state. Whereas capitalism aims to sell goods, the socialist party-state attempted to secure legitimacy by giving goods and services away. Structural shortages, however, continually undermined this legitimacy. Moreover, they prompted the emergence of the so-called second economy. Since the planned economy could not guarantee supply, people developed a range of informal activities to obtain the goods they needed. This could include workmen moonlighting with materials obtained from their factory, shopworkers keeping scarce goods for special customers, or collective-farmers cultivating 'private plots'. However, as Verdery (Ibid:27) emphasises, the second economy was not a substitute for the planned economy. Rather it was parasitic upon it.

As the competence of the socialist-party state began to further wane from the 1970s, the types of breakdown and
transformation that occurred were shaped by the inner contradictions and tensions within the system. In short, there was a growing autonomy of regions, together with their enterprises and related client networks, in relation to the centre. Pursuing the neomedieval metaphor, Verdery (Ibid: 208) notes that the Soviet work organisation had an affinity with feudalism. Unlike Western capitalism where the firm is essentially an economic institution, the Soviet enterprise was a primary unit of society, a source of services and goods, and a base of political power. The feudal model of production was based on a "parcelling out" of sovereignty. That is, the creation of zones of authority with overlapping boundaries and, at the same time, no universal centre of competence.

From a different context, a similar image had been drawn by Ellis (1995) for the changing nature of political authority in Liberia. Especially, the emergence of autonomous warlord systems.

This has produced a mosaic of militia zones of control, where civilians have some degree of protection but must pay tribute in kind to the local warlord, constantly shifting frontier zones in which civilians are liable to raiding from all sides. The aim is control of people and acquisition of booty more than to control territory in the conventional military manner (Ellis, 1995: 185).

Similar views have been expressed for Sierra Leon (Reno, 1995, April: 30) and for South Sudan during the latter part of the 1980s (Duffield, 1994).

2.6.3 Separatism and Re-Traditionalisation

In the Soviet Union, by 1990, the regions were already exerting a visible autonomy from the central government (Humphrey, 1991). A situation had developed in which it was increasingly uncertain where government and the law resided. Productive enterprises and firms where being run in an increasingly personalised way as separate suzerainties. That is, attempting to use their control of resources as leverage to protect members. In many respects, eroding nation-state competence was, on the one hand leading to a greater dependence on locality and, on the other, the erection of local barriers to exclude migrants and outsiders.

The collapse of the party-state reinforced the tendencies to personalism and patronage inherent in such arrangements, making many people dependent on their locality, their workplace, or their boss for access to food, housing and loans (Verdery, 1996: 206).

Sheirup's (1992;1997) analysis of the break-up of Yugoslavia reflects and amplifies this approach. The effects of Yugoslavia's 'self management' reform, rather modernising the socialist system, led to a growing autonomy of the republics and a weakening of the Federation. By the 1980s, the republics were already beginning to look and act like nation-states. Local party bosses and managers attempted to maintain
legitimacy by continuing to provide employment and social services despite worsening economic conditions. In competition with the others, each republic, often at the level of the individual enterprise, tried to forge links with international companies. Technology transfer was uncoordinated and, ultimately, irrational. The deepening crisis tended to reinforce local relations and kinship ties. In a reversal of the international trend toward urbanisation, this included a strengthening of urban-rural links. Maintaining family land or helping relatives on their farms was an increasingly important dietary supplement. A trend which would develop further during the war (Duffield, 1994 March). Republic structures were,

...to blend organically with the most authoritarian features of the social and political relations of real socialism. The local party elites and the increasingly 'national' working classes of the single republics autonomous provinces were to be bound together by innumerable ties of an increasingly traditionalistic character. These were displayed in idioms such as kinship, friendship, locality and ethnicity, taking the form of a complex network of reciprocal favours, pervading the entire society (Schierup, 1997: 55-56).

Based on the bureaucracies which self management had created at the republic and province level, ethnic particularism developed politically into distinct nationalist ideologies. Movements which supported the emergence of separatist economic tendencies. Republics attempted to protect their interests and those of their clients, including forming linkages with foreign companies, by blocking and undermining those of others. As a prelude to war, closed sub-economies emerged and the level of intra-republic investment dwindled. The term 'ethnic cleansing' entered the public domain following the brutal activities of Serbian paramilitary units in Croatia and Bosnia Hercegovina in 1991-92. This process, however, has a longer history in the region and was used by all parties prior to the outbreak of war (Schierup, 1993). From 1990, for example, following the first multiparty elections in Croatia, Serbs were purged from the government bureaucracies. A similar process of administrative cleansing took place in Bosnia Hercegovina following the election ethnically oriented parties in 1991.

While the Balkan war may have coined the term ethnic cleansing, it is clear that the process of social inclusion and exclusion involved has much wider application. It would seem typical of the reworking of political authority in a period of declining state competence and globalisation. It is these processes and not the reappearance of age-old and suppressed ethnic hatreds (Kaplan, 1994; Kennedy, 1993), which are important. Africa, as well as East Europe and the Transcaucus region can provide many examples. Regarding the European region, however, the effects of the demise of central authority have been greatest where pre-existing federal systems collapsed as republics declared their autonomy. That is, in Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union. While less violent,
similar processes, however, have been taking place in other areas including, Hungary and the Czech Republic. If one looks at the East European and Transcaucasia region, one thing becomes apparent. The wars and breakdown that have accompanied the reworking of political authority are not irrational events somehow unconnected with normal, that is long-term and socially embedded, political processes within the region. Rather, the wars of the 1990s appear, if anything, as a quickening or intensification of these processes. In most cases, the wars and instability can be regarded as 'successful' in that they have established the separatist ethnocracies that their perpetrators sought. In the case of the Balkans this is despite unprecedented Western ameliorative involvement. Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia Hercegogne (divided into three ethnic enclaves) and Macedonia have established ethnocentric polities. In the Transcaucus region, Amenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia (practically divided into three of four enclaves) are similar. Albania, Moldovia and Slovakia could also join these numbers (Ivenkovic, 1997). While not established by violence, the secession of the Baltic states of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania have also added to the growing list of ethnocentric states. That is, states which implicitly or explicitly define citizenship in ethnic terms and, moreover, use de facto or de jure measures to penalise minorities. For such autocratic states, maintaining internal social boundaries is important for realising the political legitimacy on which they depend.

2.6.4 Warlord Structures

In attempting to analyse the new forms of politically authority arising from the erosion of nation-state competence, Verdery (1996: 209) has suggested that we need an ethnography of the state. That is, the state not seen as a thing, as a collection of institutions, but as a set of social processes and relations. Globalisation, the move from government to governance, and the redefinition of state authority in relation to new supra and subnational actors, demands this type of approach. Sufficient has already been said regarding neomedievalism and overlapping sovereignties to extend this metaphor to the question of warlords. This term first came into popular usage as a way of describing China during the 1920s. That is, the appearance of local strongmen able to control an area and exploit its resources and people while, at the same time, keeping a weak central authority at bay. By the mid 1980s, this concept had already been used in Africa to describe the situation in Chad (May, 1985). Apart from the control of territory, which is often of a fluid character, a factor which one should emphasise about modern warlords are the linkages that that forge with the international economy. Today's successful warlords act locally but think globally.

A major difficulty in studying warlord structures is that they are extra-legal. This difficulty, however, extends to the whole question of second or parallel economies. Like the second economy of the socialist party-state, African parallel economies have developed in response to the rigidities and malformations affecting the productive system: colonial
borders, punitive tariffs and the price distortions of structural adjustment (Meagher, 1990). While under researched they are extensive, forming part of transregional and even transcontinental grey trading networks. Nor should it be assumed that parallel activity is less important than legitimate trade. The UN currently estimates, for example, that not only has the world's drug trade grown dramatically over the last decade, but with an estimated annual turnover of $400 billion it is now equivalent to 8% of world trade (Taylor, 1997). In other words, it is now bigger than international trade in motor vehicles, steel or iron. The magnitude of this parallel economy is further indicated if one examines the significance for a drug producing country. During the late 1980s, for example, coca cultivators in Bolivia where estimated to have earned some $316 million on their crops. This was more than the value of all the rest of Bolivia's agricultural production (George, 1992: 41-42). At this time, Bolivia was also producing about 1 million kilos of cocaine paste. Leaf cultivation and paste production were the main source of foreign currency, exceeding the performance of all legal exports. Estimates for the total amount monetised range from $0.5 - $1.5 billion per year or, at the higher range, about 1/3 of the official Bolivian GNP.

In themselves, such magnitudes are not that remarkable. They could matched not only by other cocaine producers but by parallel economies in Africa and the European East as well. Albanian, for example, is estimated to realise one fifth of its national income through smuggling (Borger, 1997 April 26). In relation to Bolivia, what is notable is that for the IMF, when assessing the Bolivian economy for structural adjustment purposes, makes no mention of the drug industry (George, 1992: 46). Because it is illegal it cannot be measured or controlled, therefore, for official aid purposes it does not exist. UNDP's annual Human Development Report figures on global income have already been mentioned. While reflecting the concentration of the conventional economy in the North, the inability to reflect parallel and grey economic activities suggests that there is a gapping hole in these figures regarding the South. This omission can give the impression that the South is becoming economy-less. This in turn, supports mechanistic views that internal conflicts are symptomatic of predatory or compensatory resource wars (Nafziger, 1996). Phenomena which will disappear as development tackles the causes of scarcity.

Reno (1995 April) has argued that warlord political strategies should be seen in a more long-term light. Indeed, as representing innovative and viable non-state alternatives for political authority. Globalisation and regionalisation means that,

...marginalisation on a global level offers local actors a chance to force a renegotiation of local political accommodations... choices in political struggle to include illicit opportunities, as social actors - including those controlling formal state institutions -
discover new resources and allies outside formal state channels (Ibid: 6).

Political authority in such circumstances becomes a form of crisis management encouraging experimentation and innovation. Despite insecurity or, in some cases, donor governments imposing aid conditionalities, it is also the case that crisis regions have still managed to form a variety of external relations.

'Warlordism' and incumbent ruler's intentional destruction of institutions are examples of debureaucratisation and shifts in political forms, rather than 'state of decay' in the sense of abjuring any institutionalisation of political authority (Ibid: 9).

Reno uses the example of Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) as an example of this type of alternative (Ibid: 11-18; Reno, 1995). From a small scale invasion force in 1989, the NPFL reached its zenith in 1992-93. By this time, and dispensing with a juridical state, Taylor exercised control over much of Liberia and part of Sierra Leone. A fluid area the NPFL called 'Greater Liberia' or 'Taylorland'. Apart from coercion, in order to cement his control Taylor established a vigorous external trade in timber, agricultural produce and minerals, including diamonds. This trade was conducted through a number of foreign firms and commercial networks. In terms of militia support, Taylor relied on the marginalised youth, especially from the Mano and Gio ethnic groups. That is, those elements particularly alienated from the decaying patrimonial network of the state. Youth fired with,

...a promise of a society where, work, faith and bravery, not connections and wealth determine one's success in life. Those at the bottom of old patron-client networks have little use for the aristocrats who made use of post-colonial dictatorships to exploit subjects (Reno, 1995 April: 28).

Foreign firms where essential in consolidating Taylor's social position. Firestone, Tyre and Rubber Co, Swindler and Berlin, Washington DC (a PR company) and French commercial interests where involved. During the early 1990s, Taylor was France's third largest supplier of tropical hardwoods. In this respect, NPFL activity is a good example of the blurring of legitimate and extra-legal parallel activity in the present period. It is indicative of a grey zone of international commercial activity which has become increasingly important in recent years (Pech and Beresford, 1997 Jan 19). Taylor also formed alliances with other networks following similar survival strategies in the former Soviet Union. For example, a privatised Ukrainian weapons manufacturer, COLA, provided small arms. Regarding internal commercial relations, several prominent Monrovian families headed companies in Taylor's area. These included, Logging International Timber Inc and Bong Bank. He also incorporated Lebanese companies active on the coast. With their cross-border links into Cote de'Ivoire,
they also opened up another route for arms supplies. Taylor’s state and warlord opponents also made use of similar strategies.

Taylor was a pioneer in the use of foreign companies as a strategy both to expand this resource base and control territory. Compared to the patrimonial dependence on state institutions for resources, the growing reliance on foreign firms and intermediaries is a new development. It will be returned to below in relation to the discussion of privatisation. Regarding this development,

...to attract some foreign collaborators, rulers may convince prospective partners that they can profit from non-enforcement of regulations and benefit from the private use of state power (Reno, 1995: 112).

The expanding grey zone of international commercial activity, through negotiation and private deals with rulers, companies are able to secure a degree of privilege and, in necessary, protection. Regarding the ruler, resources and outside networks are denied opponents. Similar types of arrangement have accompanied the expansion of NGO welfare activities in Africa. Not constituting a state, Taylor was also free from creditor demands. At the same time, however, he had access to foreign companies. In some respects, he was better placed than many juridical states. None of this parallel and grey activity, however, which is currently being replicated across the continent, appears in official aid and development statistics.

2.6.5 The Viability of Parallel Economies

An important characteristic of parallel economies is that they are dynamic. As new opportunities arise and circumstances alter they change and mutate over time. They are also extremely heterogeneous, reflecting different local circumstances and linking a variety of actors and intermediaries. Within Africa, for example, there appears to be a distinction between parallel actors that are able to control and exploit valuable commodities, such as, hardwoods and diamonds, and those that cannot. This establishes a rough distinction between, say West and Southern Africa as opposed to the Horn. Regarding the latter, this has meant that diaspora remittances and humanitarian assistance has played a more important role. Remittances, for example, were an important aspect of the Eritrean Peoples Liberation Front (EPLF) political economy (Duffield and Prendergast, 1994). They have also played a major role in Sudan’s parallel economy (Brown, 1992). Regarding humanitarian aid, it is perhaps significant that whereas all of the rebel formations in the Horn have formed humanitarian wings in order to interface with the aid community, those in West and Southern Africa have not found this necessary (Ellis, Per Com). In this respect, Garang’s Sudan Peoples Liberation Army (SPLA) is among those movements that are the most dependent on foreign aid. This gives it some different characteristics compared to, for example, Samvimbi’s UNITA or Taylor’s NPFL. Not least, as a
means of accessing foreign aid, it has developed a client civil administration.

Even for aid dependent organisation's like the SPLA, however, the nature of that dependence has changed over time. This has been initiated by and encouraged changing internal and external relations. During the 1980s, the core of the SPLA was reliant on relief assistance being distributed by the UNHCR to border refugee camps within Ethiopia (African Rights, 1997). Within South Sudan, however, the SPLA developed through a combination of playing on ethnic tensions and instigating a process of asset stripping from opposing or powerless ethnic groups (Duffield, 1994). With the fall of the Ethiopian Dergue in 1992, and the expulsion of the SPLA from their base camps, this situation changed. Of necessity having to consolidate itself within South Sudan, asset stripping, with the exception of ethnic schisms within the SPLA itself, has given way to promoting parallel trade and taxing aid distributed through the UN's Operation Lifeline Sudan.

Similar changes over time can be detected in Southern Africa. During the 1980s, both RENAMO in Mozambique and UNITA in Angola developed similar economies. That is, through displacement and captive labour, the development of agricultural home production areas. This was distinct from outside taxation areas and those regions reserved for infrastructural destruction in a policy of government asset denial (Duffield, 1994 March: 29). Regarding UNITA, its home area was in southern Angola adjoining the Namibian border. This facilitated the cross-border assistance it then received from South Africa. In 1989, as a result of the changing external political environment, this cross-border assistance ceased. This promoted the movement of UNITA's political economy to the north as it established its presence in Angola's diamond fields (Vines, 1993).

During the uneasy peace following the accords of 1994, UNITA, in many areas competing with army officers, consolidated its position in the diamond fields. At the same time, UNITA developed links with the Zaire's patriarch Mobutu, establishing bases in the South of this country. In this way, UNITA became part of Mobutu's diamond network, linking Lebanese, Angolan and South African commercial networks (Reno, 1995 April: 26). In the mid 1990s, Angolan government revenue from diamonds was $36 million per year. At the same time, however, it was estimated that $350 million, nearly ten times that amount, was leaking out through the Angola part of the network alone (van Kiekerk, 1995 Sept 17).

UNITA's reluctance to give up its control in the diamond fields continually undermined the UN's demobilisation efforts (Nicols, 1997). Eventually resulting in proposals to divide the diamond fields between the government and UNITA, allowing the latter to mine them legally. This situation, however, has changed with the recent fall of Mobutu. This development, helped by Angolan, Ugandan and Rwandan support of Laurence Kabila's Alliance for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire, has
reduced UNITA influence. It has also seen a realignment in relation to the exploitation of the mineral wealth of the region. In what is now the Democratic Republic of Congo, even before Mobutu had fallen, foreign mineral companies were brokering deals with Kabila and severing their relations with the dying regime (McGreal, 1997 Apr 17).

This type of dynamism and shifting relations is typical of parallel and grey networks elsewhere. The viability of this type of activity is suggested in another non-state area of Africa, that is, Somalia. This is a further example of the compatibility of parallel activity, warlordism and foreign commercial interests. Like Albania (Lennon, 1997 Feb 20), the present Somalian economy can be seen as a burlesque of deregulation and the free market.

Since June 1995 Mogadishu has been partitioned between three main warlords. The southern area is divided between two of these and is currently the main zone of instability. The central districts have been devastated by fighting and there is no running water or electricity. However, the currency is stable and the economy is widely regarded as expanding (Bradbury, 1997: 20-22). There are three telecommunication companies operating mobile telephone networks. Since fighting has destroyed the physical infrastructure satellite technology is in demands. Prices for calls are said to be better than before the war (Bellos, 1997 June 20). A Malaysian company has recently established a bank and an airline has begun operating commercial flights to Djibouti. An American and an Italian company are also producing and exporting bananas. At the same time, Lebanese and Bosnian companies are importing arms. Somali businessmen, many supported by remittances from abroad, are optimistic concerning present commercial opportunities without a state. As one post-modern trader explained,

There are no regulations. The competition is very healthy for the businesses and for the customers (Ibid).

It would be tempting to look at this healthy, albeit largely parallel or grey economic activity form an evolutionist perspective. That is, as a sign that Somalia is on the road to recovery and that economic growth will eventually produce peace and reconciliation. No doubt, many policy makers have already reached with comforting conclusion. In this respect, it is worth considering a prophetic article written in 1981 (Miller) which, even then, pointed to the extensive nature of the parallel economy in Somalia and its potential for instability (also, Jamal, 1988). Current signs of economic recovery could be another case of 'back to the future'.

According to conventional wisdom, Africa has more than its share of the poorest countries in the world. Many areas of the European East are also joining this hapless club. Examining parallel activity, however, one gets a different if not alarming impression. Regions in which the average lot is increasing poverty, also appear to be awash with money and opportunities for those able to command organised violence.
Although lacking state legitimacy, it is estimated, for example, that during the early 1990s, Charles Taylor’s activities in Liberia netted him an income of around $400 to $450 million per year (Reno, 1996: 10). Between 1992 and 1996, Savimbi’s Angolan diamond operations earned him a similar annual return or about $1.5 billion in total (Economist, 1996 Jul 13). While weapons still have to be purchased, this is still a reasonable income. Where estimates have been made of the amount of wealth in private hands, as in the case of Sudan, the inference has been drawn that it is more than enough to pay the foreign debts of the countries concerned (Brown, 1992). The issue is not one of poverty per se, it is the governance gap which allows survival strategies with a high social cost to be pursued and, at the same time, ensures that little of this wealth is shared with the general population. Indeed, much of it is made at its expense.

2.6.6 Privatisation and Democracy

The above discussion of warlord structures and parallel economies has largely focused on instances of coercive political authority existing in the absence, or outside of a juridical state. Such examples, however, are relatively uncommon. What is important, however, as Reno (1995, Apr) has pointed out, the viability of such strategies is reflected in the fact that state actors are increasingly resorting to warlord strategies. That is, they are axing state bureaucracies as a means of managing internal opposition. At the same time, they are embracing parallel and grey economic activities while forging new alliances with international and subnational intermediaries. The types of parallel networks discussed above are just as likely to be supported by juridical states as warlord figures.

While the architecture of post-patrimonial state may differ from its earlier national form, it does represents attempts to re-establish a degree of stability between state actors and other independent and quasi-independent centres of authority. Another way of looking at this situation, it to regard the trend towards regional autonomy and re-traditionalisation discussed above, as producing counter trends. That is, toward the reconstitution of some form of central and regulatory authority. In the case of East Europe, Verdery (1996) has described this as a simultaneous process of “destatization” and “restatization”. The ethnocracies of the European East are an example of the latter. Such processes are underpinned by both internal and external pressures, including that exercised by donor governments, for a legal and responsible political authority. It is in this context, that is, the reconstruction of state authority under globalised conditions that one can analyse the issue of privatisation.

Like civil society or democracy, privatisation is a powerful symbolic operator for Western governments and donor agencies. In relation to Africa, it represents the willingness of rulers to turn their backs on patrimonialism and state corruption, and embrace development. For the European East, it is the end of the socialist nightmare and the first step on the
transition belt to liberal-democracy. Since privatisation has become an important condition for aid, it is a symbolic language that many southern rulers have also learnt to speak. At the same time, however, privatisation does not contradict the feudal model of political authority discussed above. That is, the emergence of multiple and overlapping areas of sovereignty in the absence of an overall central competence. In some respects, this also reflects the neo-liberal ideal of deregulated markets and a small facilitator state. Neither does privatisation represent a problem for rulers wishing to lose a now increasingly expensive and demanding client network based in state bureaucracies (Reno, 1995 April). In fact, it is a real political opportunity. The concept of privatisation conceals a gulf between symbolic meaning and actual practice.

The fundamentalist National Islamic Front (NIF) regime in Sudan is a good example. It has extensively used privatisation to purge its opponents within the state bureaucracies or, by selling state assets at derisory prices to its political allies, to marginalised them.

The NIF have privatised and rationalised with a dedication that out Thatchers Margaret Thatcher, but with few of the constraints she faced (Hirst, 1997 May 27).

While apparently speaking the same language, the West’s evolutionary views may translate into something very different on the ground. If one can argue that an ethnography of the state is required, this is equally the case with regard to privatisation.

While it is common to talk of liberal-democracy, evidence suggest that the hyphen is a charlatan. There is no necessary or historic connection between the two. The spectacular growth of East Asia is illustrative of this point. Within the South, the symbolic language of privatisation has been widely used by rulers restructuring political authority. This is true of the Balkans as it is of fundamentalist Sudan or secular Uganda. The introduction of economic liberalism, however, has not translated into democratisation. Indeed, as the case of Somalia indicates, markets can easily operate with no state at all. In the majority of cases in the South, liberalisation has either produced ruler opposition to democratisation on the grounds that it would promote instability. Or else, it has functioned as an ethnic plebiscite or in other ways strengthened sectarian control.

While there are some broad similarities in terms of the manner in which post-patrimonial political authority has been evolving in Africa and the European East, the predominant pattern of privatisation, and by extension, the types of state being reconstructed, have some important differences. In the European East, for example, since the mid 1980s two main privatisation strategies have been evolving. That is, the expansion of the second economy and, especially, the acquisition of enterprises by former managers (Verdery, 1996: 209). Over the same period, in Africa the involvement of foreign companies, especially in relation to obtaining high
value production or service concessions, appears more pronounced. These differences, however, in the light of a similar governance gap have created the same demand. That is, for private protection.

2.7 THE PRIVATISATION OF PROTECTION

2.7.1 The Russian Mafia

As the competence of the nation-state has eroded and new intermediaries and centres of sovereignty have emerged earlier legal frameworks and social consensus on who holds legitimate authority have been blurred. In many areas of the South, the changing nature of the state has undermined existing property rights together with legal access and redress. At the same time, the emerging political formations have not adjusted or reformed legal frameworks to reduce such ambiguity (Verdery, 1996). In many respects, this would be a threat to ruler flexibility. The result, expressed in several different ways, has been a growing demand for protection: the privatisation of violence. In the past, the nation-states monopoly of violence was one of its crowning achievements and a central plank on which its authority rested (Derlugian, 1996).

This loss of monopoly has had powerful repercussions throughout Africa and the European East. The greying of the small-arms industry and the 'militiarisation' of many African rural socio-economic subsistence groups in an attempt to protect their assets is a case in point (Turton, 1989; Keen, 1994). Regarding Russia, Varese (1994) has argued that the rise of the Russian mafia, after the fashion of Sicily, can be understood in terms of the transition from monopoly ownership to private property in the context of the inability of the state to legally circumscribe or protect that property. In Russia, mafia groups have arisen in the wake of the post-1986 economic reforms (Ibid: 231). Further rounds of reform and privatisation have increased the numbers of property owners. At the same time, the state has been seen as increasingly ineffective in producing clear legislation or in enforcing property rights. As a result, the demand for private protection, and opportunities for extortion, have grown. Estimates for the number of mafia type groups operating in Russia in the mid 1990s, for example, range from 2,600 to 5,000 (Ibid: 232). Not only is property inadequately protected, but businessmen frequently resort to violence between each other as a means of settling commercial matters. By the early 1990s, the need for protection and the hiring of private guards had also spread to Russia's privatised agricultural sector.

In relation to the privatisation of protection in Russia, Varese makes a very important point. That is, without a supply of people willing to carry out violent duties, a demand for protection on its own will not necessarily produce a mafia type phenomenon (Varese: 1994: 246-47). In Russia, an important part of his supply has come from the shrinkage of the security and police services. During the early 1990s, for example, the discharge rate in the armed services was some 40-
50,000 per year. In other words, conditions have allowed supply and demand to meet. Africa exhibits a similar processes.

2.7.2 Executive Outcomes

In terms of the global economy, Africa has ceased to a generalised supplier of raw materials. Deregulation and its increasing ‘openness’ has allowed a new type of political economy to emerge. That is, the selective mining or exploitation of valuable minerals such as diamonds, oil and hardwoods, together with niche agricultural produce, such as flowers and tropical fruits, in conditions which convey a good deal of autonomy to the company concerned. At the same time, when combined with post-partrimonial political authority, it implies formations with a wide governance gap and only residual social and welfare functions. That conditions for this type of commercial activity are growing is suggested by the recent floatation of South African mining groups on the London Stock Exchange. A move described as,

...reminiscent of the efforts of the buccaneers who tapped the market to fund their gold and diamond adventures before the Boer war (Farelly and Woolf, 1997 June 8).

Given the changing nature of the state and property rights, however, the issue of protection in relation to such activities has also arisen. This has been approached in two ways by companies. First, by seeking state protection, second, and increasingly more important, by supplying their own protection. Reno’s (1995, April) analysis of Sierra supplies model which has wider application on the continent. Although regarded as a juridical state, as a means of political survival, rulers in Sierra Leone have increasingly adopted warlord strategies and tactics. Valentine Strasser, for example, who came to power in 1992, like Taylor in Liberia invited foreign companies to take over Sierra Leone’s diamond mining.

Repeated attempts to attract foreign mining firms to areas of rebel activity signalled efforts to control access to wealth and the groups and politicians likely to collaborate with rebels. Some firms proposed to use private security forces to patrol exclusive zones (Ibid: 22).

During first half of the 1990s, several foreign mining companies attempted, with partial success, to use their own security forces to police their concessions. Such acts of ‘privatisation’ as well as marginalising unwanted patrimonial networks, can also deny resources to rebel groups. At the same time, donor governments can be satisfied that resources are being efficiently exploited, thereby increasing the likelihood of debt repayment.

As in Russia, the demand for protection in Africa has been met by an available supply of weapons and people able to provide
the required services. The devastating importance of the greying of the small-arms industry and the consequent availability of cheap submachine-guns or throwaway anti-personnel mines, cannot be emphasised enough. Such weapons have allowed many of those now surplus to a decaying conventional economy to take up protection and extortion duties. In Mogadishu, for example, at the beginning of 1997, a Somali company, Barakaat, opened one of the first banks in the city for several years. Of the company's 300 employees, a third are armed guards (Bellos, 1997 June 20). Similar supply elements, however, can be seen internationally, including the increasing occurrence of mercenary forces from the European East and the former Soviet Union (French, 1997 Feb 13; Nicoll, 1997 Jan 26).

In 1994, Sierra Rutile (a subsidiary of American owned Nord Resources) explored the possibility of using the British firm, Gurkha Security Guards (GSG) to provide protection for its mining activities (Reno, 1996: 14). While having limited success, such a company is only possible due to post-Cold War reduction in Britain's military capacity. Similar developments are taking place in many African countries. For example, a Dutch registered security firm, International Defence and Security (IDAS) is presently mining diamonds in northern Angola (Economist, 1996 Jul 13). One of the more successful organisations presently operating is the South African based security and commercial amalgam Executive Outcomes. The security arm of Executive Outcomes is largely a privatised remnant of South Africa's apartheid military establishment.

Due to the nature of its work and its complex corporate structure, the origins and functioning of Executive Outcomes is less than transparent. Different sources even conflict on when it was established, either 1989 or 1991. One thing is clear, however, Executive Outcomes represents a new style of mercenary activity. It claims, for example, to be apolitical and to work only in relation to legitimate governments. Unlike the mercenaries of the 1960s and 1970s,

Executive Outcomes has a less freebooting image, less ideological image and far fewer recruits from outside Africa (Harding, 1997 March 8).

At the same time, however, it is closely tied to commercial interests. Rather than a single company, Executive Outcomes has a corporate structure. Apart from security, its various members able to provide a range of services including mineral extraction, civil engineering, marketing and finance. Unlike tradition mercenaries, Executive Outcomes are not just guns for hire.

They are the advance guard for major business interests engaged in a latter-day scramble for the mineral wealth of Africa (Pech and Beresford, 1997 Jan 19).

Within its corporate structure, the leading personalities are from South African and British military backgrounds. There
are also links with European intelligence services. The nearest thing to a parent company is Strategic Resource Corporation (SRC) registered in South Africa. Executive Outcomes exists within it as one of a dozen or more companies. This structure allows it to maintain a low profile while granting flexibility in relation to such things as capital movements. It has been registered within the UK since 1993, initially as part of Branch Energy, now Diamond Works. The secretary of its Chelsea office is said to handle incoming calls for 18 different companies (Ibid). These range from international gold, oil and diamond mining ventures, to chartered accountants, an airline, security services and offshore financial management.

Executive Operations usually barters its services for a stake in the mineral wealth of the country concerned. It is currently operational in about 20 countries, mostly in Africa. Its involvement in Angola and Sierra Leone are its two most celebrated ventures. In both cases, being regarded at the time as relatively successful in turning the course of the war. Ranger and Heritage Oil helped finance the Executive Outcomes operation in Angola in exchange for government oil concessions. In its two year operation (1993-95) it also alleged that the Angolan government paid $80 million for its services. After the limited success of other private security services, from 1995, Executive Outcomes supported the government of Valentine Strasser in Sierra Leone for about a year. Here, is was able to push the RUF rebels from the diamond fields and create the conditions for the multiparty elections of February 1996. Although temporarily restoring security, the recent coup in Sierra Leone serves to indicate the protracted nature of such instability. Moreover, Executive Outcomes sphere of operation was always focused and restricted to the wealth creating areas.

The trouble was that the company operated only in areas where the economic stakes were high. Outside the mineral enclaves, it was banditry as usual (Harding, 1997 March 8).

The degree of force that Executive Outcomes can field is significant. Indeed, it amounts to the first corporate army that Africa has seen since the nineteenth century. Ibis Air, an associate company has two MI-17 helicopters, two Hind M24 gunships, two jet fighters and well as several Boeing 727s and other small aircraft. Regarding ground troops, these are largely Angolan officered by white South Africans. While causality figures are confidential, in both Angola and sierra Leone, these were rumoured to be in double figures.

Concerning the future of Executive Outcomes Pech and Beresford (1997) cite a British intelligence report. This claims the company is gaining a reputation for efficiency, especially with the rulers of smaller countries. By contrast, the UN is

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4 During the same period, the warlord Savimbi, with whom Executive Outcome's was competing, grossed around ten times this amount. It's an African version of loosing the war but winning the peace.
seen as slow and cumbersome. Executive Outcomes is, as a consequence, regarded as of growing importance. The company itself, wants to diversify out of purely security and protection work into the field of post-conflict rehabilitation, especially,

... reconstruction and the enormously lucrative logistics of rehabilitation. It is cultivating expertise in water projects, road-building, housing, tourism, conservation, clinical care and medical supply, perhaps extension farming (Harding, 1997).

Such contracts for Executive Outcomes, or more precisely its associated companies, are coming up in Mozambique and Zambia. In many respects, this move would seem a logical development. Companies such as Executive Outcomes are able to bridge two distinct agendas. They can support ruler survival strategies and, at the same time, are able to satisfy donor demands for privatisation and efficiency. This type of operation can use its corporate structure to support its different but complementary operations to achieve greater market share. One subsidiary can exploit the mortgaged mineral wealth of a country, another can repair vital infrastructure while the protection arm provides overall security. Each of these activities having its own payment arrangement. Levering in donor rehabilitation funding through other associated agencies could complement this arrangement. If an element of cross-subsidy was introduced it might mean that development assistance through such a commercial channel may not be appreciably more expensive than through NGOs. For some donors the promise of such a package, that is, political stability, the efficient exploitation of resources together with reconstruction, could represent the ultimate technical fix.

2.7.3 Parallel Actors and Commercial Security

In terms of structure and motivation, there is a good deal of similarity between mafia and warlord type structures on the one hand, and commercial security amalgams on the other. They are both privatised forms of protection, they exist in relation to weak states and they covert and compete over the same productive assets or mineral wealth. They also inhabit the same private world. Perhaps the only difference is one is extra-legal and concerned with parallel activities. While the other is a grey operation, providing essential linkages to the conventional international economy. Even here, however, differences may be ones of degree rather than absolutes. They are rather like the cops and robbers of the film world where the norms and values of either side are depicted as being much the same. Indeed, the story-line, is centred on this blurring of agendas and identities.

8. POST-MODERN CONFLICT

This review of globalisation and the changing nature of political authority has revealed a wide heterogeneity of directions and responses. Other than a number of general propositions, for example, the emergence of multiple and
overlapping sovereignties in relation to the attempt to reconstruct new forms central authority, there is no single model. Actual adaptations can range form regional separatism, warlord entities, weak state combinations, and so on, through to ethnocracies and fundamentalist states. Each of these entities is capable of managing parallel or grey activities and interacting with international intermediaries in innovative ways. Non-state entities, moreover, are just as viable as state forms. Indeed, many new states have adopted warlord characteristics.

At the beginning of this discussion, it was pointed out that so-called internal wars should be analysed as an extension of the long-term and embedded social process that constitute everyday life. One such process that links both North and South is the changing nature of the nation-state. That is, under the effects of globalisation and the eroding of state competence, new supra and subnational intermediaries have emerged. Government has been transformed into governance as decision making networks have emerged linking international, regional, state and local actors. In both the North and the South new forms of inclusion and exclusion have developed with a consequent changing of spatial and social boundaries. While there are a number of similarities induced by globalisation, the opportunities open to northern and southern political rulers differ.

In the North, globalisation has encouraged the concentration of the conventional world economy into regionally defined productive systems to promote competition and technological innovation. In contrast, in the South the conventional economy has contracted to be increasingly replaced by parallel and grey activities. Rather than being located within integrative systems, such activities both promote and are encouraged by the deconstruction of the state and the emergence of multiple sovereignties. A process which is associated with the emergence of adaptive political strategies as southern rulers link parallel and grey activities with international business and welfare intermediaries. At the same time, such strategies help recast internal political networks and client bases.

Encouraged by privatisation, state deconstruction has generally weakened existing property rights and legal statutes. Where rulers have reconstructed globalised forms of conditional state authority, which is the majority of cases, property rights and the rule of law often remain ill-defined. As a result, while the North is attempting to de-militarise following the end of the Cold War, the growing demand for private forms of protection and the greying of the small-arms industry as led to a rearming of the South.

Globalisation together with the changing nature of political and economic activity in the South has prompted an increase in so-called internal war. This is associated with processes of localisation and the weakening of central authority. The accompanying erosion of property rights has strengthen this trend. Such conflict has frequently manifest itself in the
growth of ethnic and identity politics. Explosive forms of social inclusion and exclusion can develop as new boundaries are drawn around resources and political claims. In such wars, people, their assets, even their cultural identities, can become both targets and walls of defence. While they have structural origins in the changing nature of the state, such tendencies can also be reinforced by innovative rulers and political aspirants. People able to exploit these emerging divisions and transform the resources and assets involved into a privately controlled war economy.

While the term internal war is popular, it is misleading. Although internal aspects of conflict are very important, it tends to minimise the international dimensions of such instability. The South is being re-integrated into the North’s sphere of influence, both commercially and in terms of welfare provision, in new ways. At the same time, it implies a conventional distinction between ‘war’ and ‘peace’. The above analysis suggests something different. That is, those patterns of instability and violence we call internal war, are a reflection of long-term and embedded processes of globalisation and the reconstruction of state authority. This means that there are some general similarities between North and South. At the same time, within the South, even if open conflict is absent, similar processes and relations are present as when war is raging. War and peace are relative concepts. They appear as different degrees of each other, as either speeding up or slowing down, rather than absolute and opposed stages.

In this respect, war economies in the South have a good deal in common with peace economies. In reviewing the Balkan crisis, Bojicic et al. (1995) contrast a post-modern war economy with traditional war economies associated with the views of Clausewitze. That is, central statist control, autarchic economic production and mass social and political mobilisation in which populations are divided between fighting and productive service. The ‘total war’ of 1939-45 is the classic example.

...in contrast...the war economy is characterised by high levels of unemployment, high levels of imports and weak fragmented and decentralised administration. It could be said that the war economy represents a new type of dual economy, typical of peripheral regions exposed to globalisation (Ibid: 10-11).

Such economies are characterised by a distorted public sector integrated into a criminalised market economy. In looking at the characteristics of the war economy in the Balkans, however, Bojici et (1995) are of the opinion that,

...in a sense, it could be described as an extreme form expression of the transition from communism (Ibid: 10).

We are back in a looking glass world were opposites are the same and stages but manifestations of each other. It is in this sense that the term post-modern conflict is preferable to
the more common idea of internal war. Post-modern, in this sense, implies conflict beyond the traditional confines of the nation-state. It cannot be judged in relation to ideal models of liberal-democracy, in most cases as a form of breakdown. Instead, post-modern conflict is a new phenomenon and appeals more to the forces of differentiation and exclusion encouraged by globalisation. In this sense, as the conventional economy concentrates in the North, post-modern conflict is closely associated with the expansion parallel and grey economic networks in the South. Activities which conventional indicators do not measure and which are associated with polities having a large governance gap. The political strategies associated with post-modern conflict are often pursued at a high social cost. This distinguishes them from traditional democratic and inclusive statist forms. The political and social implications of post-modern conflict are among the main concerns of current aid policy. There is a concern, however, that aid policy has an inadequate understanding of post-modern conflict. At the same time, since its programme initiatives flow from this understanding, these too may be compromised and ineffective. The following sections examine in some detail aid policy in relation to conflict.
3. EVOLUTIONISM AND INTERNAL WAR

Mainstream aid policy is understood as that set of ideas, understandings and related solutions that the majority of donor governments, IGOs and NGOs subscribe to. For the purposes of this discussion, this is not regarded as an essentially technical body of knowledge. That is, as reflecting or approximating its developmental or transitional object to varying degrees of accuracy. To the contrary, it is viewed more as a social construct. As such, current aid policy is not monolithic, neither is it incapable of self-criticism. The different and often competing aid actors involved ensure that it is a nuanced, contradictory and frequently challenged entity. At the same time, however, mainstream aid policy is informed by a number of shared assumptions. How these assumptions compare to those different ones that inform the idea of post-modern conflict will be briefly discussed before aid policy is examined more fully.

Internal war is conventionally seen as stemming from a combination of economic scarcity, that is, impoverishment resulting from changing markets, environmental degradation, population growth, and so on, together with institutional weakness, that is, an absence of representational structures that can mediate the resulting tensions and clashes of interest. From such a combination, different typologies of conflict are often suggested. For example, "identity conflicts", "resource conflicts" or "governance conflicts" (ODA, 1997). However, while having such origins, conflict itself is usually regarded as essentially irrational. Internal war is something that once begun escalates on the basis of group misunderstandings and communication breakdowns. Things which extremists or internal or external political entrepreneurs are able to manipulate (Anderson, 1996). Originating in scarcity and organisational weakness, war itself exacerbates these problems. Economic and infrastructural breakdown is deepened while institutions are further eroded (Green, 1987). War is an engine of underdevelopment.

The analysis in the previous section is based on a different set of assumptions. Rather than economic breakdown, post-modern war economies are expressions of expanding parallel and grey networks operating at local, regional and global levels. While difficult to measure, such networks are of great significance. In many cases, being more important than the conventional economy they are supplanting. At the same time, managing such networks and refashioning political authority on their basis, requires innovation by southern rulers. Decaying conventional state and professional institutions are being replaced by new arrangements linking local and international intermediaries. Post-modern war economies are, essentially, globalised. For mainstream aid policy, war is a temporary setback on the normal path of development. Alternatively, however, it could be part of a new and flexible response to the problems of globalisation and state transformation. A
long-term adaptation rather than a short-term deflection from an idealised norm.

There is also an ethical dimension to these differing sets of assumptions. There is an implicit evolutionism within conventional wisdom. Correcting the destruction and imbalance caused by war is the task of aid policy. That is, putting societies on the path of liberal-democracy. The human rights abuses that are often associated with post-modern conflict are therefore, essentially, temporary. While viewed soberly by donor governments and aid agencies, there is nevertheless a sense that such violations will disappear once normal development is resumed. For the alternative view, however, the situation is different. A wide and often violent governance gap is an intrinsic part of the political survival strategies of many southern rulers. While these strategies may be innovative at an organisational level, they are frequently pursued at a high social cost. A situation depicted by so-called complex emergencies. Authoritarianism is a long-term characteristic of this type of adaptation. From this perspective, human rights abuse appears more serious. It is a recurrent and embedded problem that will not disappear of its own accord.

3.1 FROM REFORMING TRADE TO CHANGING BEHAVIOUR

Until the 1970s, the post-colonial model of development was mainly concerned with inequalities between nations and the economic and political measures necessary to redress this situation. To some extent it attempted to reflect the concerns and demands of Third Worldism for the reform of international trade relations. For example, resource redistribution, preferential economic mechanisms, support for infrastructural improvement, together with the creation and expansion of international structures to represent Third World political opinion. The 1975 Lome' Convention linking the EU with its African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) partners is a classic example from the end of this period (Brown, 1997). Today, however, the urge to recast international relations has been replaced by a different emphasis and direction. Development has been increasingly redefined as a series of measures which, rather than the international system, are intended to change the behaviour and attitudes within institutions and among groups and individuals within the countries concerned. While the present neo-liberal emphasis in economic relations is often regarded as harsh or even unjust (Cornia, et al, 1987), it is nevertheless widely accepted as the optimal model for maximising global welfare. Through attempts to transform expectations and approaches, the task of development (and latterly transition) has become one of helping people better adapt to this environment.

Inequality, economic growth and resource redistribution per se are no longer the main issues within the new "human development" paradigm (UNDP, 1992). It is how people cope with their situation and the means by which they can be supported in mitigating the risks and stresses involved. This
is now the focus of practical development (Unvin, 1996). Ideas of empowerment and sustainability are refracted through a lens of behavioural and attitudinal change. Whether this relates to co-operative forms of working, promoting the role of women, managing small loans, or conserving the environment; preferably through participatory methods, the onus is on changing the way people do things and what they think (Pupavac, 1997). In the space of a generation, the whole meaning of development has changed radically. It is no longer concerned with resource transfer or international reform. It is now more concerned with adapting behaviour to fit the liberal-democratic project.

3.2 INTERNALISING CONFLICT

Reflecting the changing definition of development, there has been a growing trend to regard issues of development and transition as problems within the domestic institutions and social relations of the countries concerned. Most donor governments and aid agencies, in approaching the issue of conflict and its effects, usually cite the rising incidence of internal war, together with its high social cost, as the reason for their involvement. Agencies usually regard themselves as responding to a growing and hitherto unmet need. To some extent this may be true. At the same time, however, this positioning by aid agencies tends to take for granted and thereby overlook a factor of equal importance: donor governments, IGOs and NGOs are now able to support projects or directly operate in a manner and in areas that less than a decade ago would have been impossible. In other words, the enhanced ability of aid agencies to respond to need is, itself, part of the wider process of globalisation and regionalisation.

While many factors underpin globalisation in the South, one thing is paramount. It would have been unfeasible without the prior demise of alternative modernist projects within the regions under consideration, that is, Third Worldism and party-state Socialism. In different ways, both attempted to maintain national independence and autonomy. Perhaps with the exception of East Asia (Amsden, 1990), there is presently no viable formal alternative to the liberal-democratic model of capitalist development. How southern rulers have adapted and incorporated international commercial and welfare intermediaries is central to the reworking of sovereignty and political authority in the post-Cold War era. At the same time, in relation to aid policy, globalisation has been synonymous with an increasing problematisation of the character of internal relations and attitudes within the South. This shift in policy is reflected, for example, in the changing international view on refugees and population displacement.

In 1980, on the occasion of the UN’s first ‘Root Causes’ debate on the origin of refugee flows, Third Worldism, while waning, was still a political force (Suhrke, 1994). The debate

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5 See above Section Two.
Within the UN's Special Political Committee divided along newer internal versus the older external views of the problem. The West, in part reflecting its anticommunist position, focused on human rights abuse. Socialist and Third World countries, however, countered that the effects of colonialism, deteriorating terms of trade and global inequality were the real causes of political unrest and refugee movements. Two reports were produced from this debate. One reflected the Third World view and was not finished until 1985. Its delay symptomatic of the difficulty of achieving consensus. The more influential by Sadruddin Aga Khan, which elaborated the internal causes, was completed earlier in 1981. The factors promoting refugee flows were variously associated with problems of state formation, the ready availability of firearms, population growth, unemployment, rapid urbanisation and environmental degradation. This view would increasingly inform the scarcity explanation of internal war. For the 1981 report, refugee flows marked,

..the inability of many governments to create conditions in which the population as a whole can expect to enjoy - quite apart from civil and political rights - the economic, social and cultural rights set out in the Declaration of Human Rights (Aga Khan, 1981, quoted by Suhrke, 1994: 16).

Besides scarcity, weak government was also a problem. For many observers the growing focus on internal relations and constraints was a welcome trend. Something which reasonably promised to give a more rounded view of development problems at a time when Cold War patronage shielded even the most corrupt of states (Duffield, 1991). This promise however was not fulfilled. Within mainstream aid policy, rather than analysing actually existing conditions, internalisation has meant the projection of the liberal-democratic ideal on the South. If southern states were failing it was because they deviated from this norm. Ideas of 'weak' or 'failed' states emerged and with them views on internal war based on sentiments of collapse and irrationality. Internalisation did not reflect a willingness to embark upon new forms of analysis. To the contrary, it appeared as a form of analytical curtailment. Of preferring images of what southern countries should or ought to become rather than analysing what they actually are.

Interestingly, the view in the 1981 Aga Khan report that instability and large-scale population displacement results from multiple causes, largely anticipates the understanding of a 'complex emergency' which entered UN usage toward the end of the 1980s (Borton, Per Com). In particular, conflict occurring when a state is no longer able to mediate a growing range of economic, environment and population problems. The UN still has to agree a common definition of a complex emergency. In practice, however, it has operated as a diplomatic device which has allowed the UN to negotiate and work with warring parties in situations of unresolved conflict. By defining conflict in multicausal terms it tends to depoliticise the issue. This has enabled some southern
rulers, themselves pursuing violent survival strategies, to appropriate the language of complex emergencies. The Sudanese fundamentalist government, for example, on several occasions, has defended itself within the UN General Assembly on the grounds that it too is a victim of a complex emergency (Karim, et al, 1996).

That conventional aid policy has projected an implicitly evolutionist liberal-democratic vision on the South, however, is not entirely without substance. By the 1980s, Third Worldism followed by Socialism had, to all appearances, disappeared as collective political projects. Under the pressure of structural adjustment they had been replaced by political fragmentation and a refocusing by southern rulers on domestic reform and debt repayment (Westlake, 1991). That some of these rulers, where using privatisation as a means of reworking political networks was not a major concern for aid policy. That they appeared to be accepting the cannons of liberalism was enough for most northern governments.

By the end of the 1980s, Western aid was increasingly being linked to political conditionality and support for democratisation (ODI, 1992). This development reinforced the earlier phase of structural adjustment and its associated erosion of economic sovereignty in the erstwhile Second and Third Worlds. The growing hegemony of the liberal-democratic project was further reinforced by the apparent role of civil society in the relatively rapid collapse of socialism in the European East (Hankiss, 1990). Reflecting the emergence of human development within the UN, similar changes were made by the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). In the early 1990s, the “Economic Dimension” was distinguished from the “Human Dimension”. That is, support for reforming internal relations, including human rights, civil society and democratisation, were formally accepted as an essential complement to the economic modalities of the transitional agenda (OSCE, 1995).

3.3 CIVIL SOCIETY: MERGING DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSITIONAL AGENDAS

During the early 1990s, a key development in terms of aid policy and conflict was the UN’s reformulation of a “relief to development continuum” (UNDP, 1994). During the Cold War period, relief and development were usually regarded as two separate activities. The continuum argument can be seen as an extension of earlier work on natural disasters to conflict situations (Anderson and Woodrow, 1989). Although the continuum proposition has received some criticism from aid agencies, this has mainly been of a technical or ordering nature. The general thrust of continuum thinking, however, that relief and development should be somehow linked or integrated has been very influential. Continuum ideas reflect the scarcity and institutional weakness view of internal conflict. More particularly, from this perspective, internal war is primarily a problem of underdevelopment. Since this condition affects all people and all institutions, everyone is, as it were, its victim. Like the notion of a complex
emergency, continuum ideas tend to depoliticise conflict and downplay the effect of deliberate ruler actions.

According to continuum thinking, apart from helping people, humanitarian aid can also do harm. Free handouts, for example, can distort economies and promote dependency. Militia groups can also divert aid for their own purposes. At the same time, reliance on foreign agencies can undermine local capacities. In other words, like conflict itself, humanitarian aid can actually reinforce underdevelopment and hence instability if not properly administered (Anderson, 1996). Continuum thinking is based on a natural disaster model of crisis. That is, after the fashion of earthquakes or floods, it conceives of 'shocks' as somehow external to a social system. Reflecting this position, the continuum regards conflict as an abnormality, as something no one, except a few thugs, really wants (Ibid: 9-10). The majority of people prefer peace. By understanding war as separate from normal society, it therefore becomes possible to argue that relief, even in the context of internal war, can be made developmental. That is, through engaging with indigenous human and material resources, it can be used to enhance local structures and capacities (Buchanan-Smith and Maxwell, 1994). Through capacity building, local institutions and actors can be helped to play a full role in the relief programme. In this manner, societies will not only be less dependent on outside assistance in any future emergency; by addressing institutional weakness they can also better avoid and resolve conflicts themselves. That these structures may themselves be politicised and, indeed, agents of conflict does not concern continuum thinking. War, after all, is abnormal.

The idea that relief has to be developmental - developmental relief - is now part of conventional aid policy.

Contrary to many past assumptions, we have found that a sharp distinction between short-term emergency relief and longer-term development aid is rarely useful in planning support for countries in open conflict. Development co-operation agencies operating in conflict zones, respecting security concerns and the feasibility of operations, can continue to identify the scope for supporting development processes even in the midst of crisis, be prepared to seize upon opportunities to contribute to conflict resolution, and continue to plan

Like the Protestant work ethic from which it derives, the idea of relief creating dependency is an old and recurrent idea. More recently, it was common, for example, during the Sahelian drought of the mid 1980s. Where research has been undertaken, however, little evidence for such dependency has been found (Silkin and Hughes, 1992). Indeed, even within the relatively easy working conditions of so-called natural disasters, general relief programmes usually deliver only a small proportion of estimated need (de Waal, 1988). In war situations, relief deliveries are often even more restricted and intermittent. It has long been recognised that individual and family coping strategies are usually the main guarantor of survival. Nevertheless, the idea of dependency persists. It is as if policy makers believe that normally rational people, on receiving an inadequate handout which they know is unreliable, will nevertheless quickly abandon any means they may possess for independent activity.
and prepare for post-conflict reconstruction (DAC, 1997 May: 3).

Where criticism have been made of the continuum idea, it has usually been levelled at its initial linear formulation. That is, relief merging with development in a uniform manner within a given society. Later versions have argued that in actual emergencies, relief, rehabilitation and development opportunities usually exist side by side and can be pursued simultaneously (Ibid: 32). The continuum debate generally, however, reflects the wider redefinition of development in terms of behavioural and institutional change. Through its emphasis on capacity building, it is also an example how aid policy, even in conflict situations, has come to focus on the idea of civil society. That humanitarian aid as a means of saving lives has tended to be replaced with a focus on institutions is returned to below.

In both development and transitional thinking, civil society is now a central concept. This development is all the more interesting given the absence among aid agencies and donor governments of a consensus regarding what civil society is or how it works (Voutira and Brown, 1995). A situation which, rather than confusion, reflects its powerful symbolic role. At best, civil society appears as an ill-defined space between the family and the state is which plural civic institutions hold sway. It reflects the neo-liberal dichotomy between state and society. In relation to NGOs in Croatia, it has been noted that,

Any application for funding, any explanation of the nature of democratisation; any plans for future development; all seem obliged to include [civil society] as a central concept. Yet, it is almost always under-theorised, insufficiently concretised in terms of specific practices, and rarely subject to critical scrutiny (Stubbs, 1995).

These remarks could just as well have been made of aid agencies operating in Africa. While there may be a problem in theorising civil society, in practice the situation is easier. It is generally regarded as synonymous with NGOs. Both local NGOs, in terms of national civil societies and international NGOs in relation to globalisation and the formation of transnational civil society. Moreover, on the basis of Western experience, civil society is usually seen as an inherently stabilising force. Regarding Eastern Europe, for example,

Systemic transformation in these regions is motivated by the positive experience of Western Political Systems base on law, human rights, pluralist government and the market economy. All of these Western values culminate in liberal democracy which, in the view of the EU and its Member States, has an in-built quality of peaceful conflict resolution, a respect for minorities and a comparatively high potential for popular participation in public policy (Rummel, 1996: 21)
It is misleading to think of civil society as a 'thing' to be 'built'. It better understood as the institutional embodiment of favourable behavioural and attitudinal sentiments: as a social process rather than a physical content.

Development and security concerns within Western aid policy have increasingly coalesced around the issue of civil society. The goal of development is the creation of a strong civil society. Insofar as such a structure embodies plural and democratic values, civil society is also a source of stability and security (Ake, 1997). That ultimately this also means Western security is illustrated in the transitional thinking relating to Europe's former planned economies. During the Cold War, international security was regarded as an intra-state matter. With the collapse of the Socialist project and the internalisation of aid policy, however, the human dimension has increasingly been regarded as a legitimate international concern.

..the individual, and his/her well-being, were to become a component of international politics, a factor for cooperation, peace and security. This was the antithesis of the traditional state-centric approach to international relations (Heraclides quoted by Guerra, 1996: 17-18).

As well as democratisation, civil society is also regarded as capable of playing an important conflict resolution role. For example, by allowing confidence building measures to be pursued.

Confidence-building during the cold war meant transparency in military information, and open communications among diplomats. The concept of confidence building today has come to mean the building of trust in a wider sense. Trust is built among people from different groups in the same society as well as between countries. And it has become more and more obvious that this building of trust can best be done by involving NGOs (Strom, 1995: 9).

In this manner, it is possible to conceive of civil society as a globalised and transnational project, capable of not only uniting individuals and groups from regions affected by war and instability, but also establishing links across Europe and beyond. Support for civil society has become a central feature of aid policy in both developmental and transitional societies. Indeed, since the liberal-democratic model now hegemonic, these agendas have increasingly merged. Or, at least, their central concepts have become inter-changeable. It is now possible to see the idea of a pluralistic civil society as the political equivalent, and compliment, of structural adjustment. A mono-theory applied across continents regardless of conditions, institutions or history.
4. THE EPIDEMIOLOGY OF INTERNAL WAR

The conventional understanding of conflict has already been outlined. That is, as having multicausal origins in relation to economic scarcity and institutional weaknesses within societies. This can be argued to constitute a core sociological assumption within aid policy. It has also been mentioned that this view tends to depoliticise post-modern conflict. Rather than seeing war as a result of innovative ruler strategies in a globalised context, it tends to regard conflict as a problem of underdevelopment. A situation in which everyone, rulers and ruled, are victims. These assumptions, however, have been developed further. This is especially in relation to a growing involvement of aid agencies with conflict resolution work (Voutira and Brown, 1995). That is, a range of activities which variously attempt to mediate between conflicting parties in order to prevent, manage or resolve conflict.

4.1 EVOLUTIONARY CONFLICT AND FUNCTIONAL HARMONY

Despite different activities and operational models, conflict resolution rests on a relatively narrow conceptual base. Indeed, almost all of its activities can be derived from several core assumptions. While the social background to internal war is regarded as stemming from scarcity and institutional weakness, the practice of conflict resolution is unconcerned with issues of large-scale redistribution. This apparent contradiction is resolved by aid policy regarding conflict as, essentially, abnormal (Anderson, 1996: 10). Geared toward engineering behavioural and attitudinal change, in terms of practical application, it is shaped more by a socio-psychological understanding of instability. Because conflict resolution must uphold the possibility of its own success, it is conceptually locked-in to regarding political violence as having relatively small, localised and treatable beginnings. Thus, while not contradicting the scarcity origins of war, conflict resolution agencies tend to operate at the level of individual and group dynamics. Post-modern conflict is further depoliticised, appearing as a thing-in-itself and autonomous of wider relations and structures. In this respect, its imagery borrows heavily from the world of medicine. Conflict is likened to a treatable illness which if left unattended can develop into a terminal disease.

While not always articulated in full and often employing different terms, many NGOs and aid agencies employ a socio-psychological model of conflict. That is, they regard it as originating at the level of disagreements (ActionAid, 1994) or communication breakdowns between individuals and groups.

Lack of good communication is nearly always a contributory - sometimes the most important - factor in conflict: both a cause and a result of heightened tensions and the growth of misunderstanding. Good
communication, on the other hand, is both an expression of respect and a means of creating it (Greek, 1995:4).

Under certain conditions, people may simply misunderstand each other. Especially, if they are ignorant of the other groups concerns or there is a history ethnic animosity. Left alone, such dissonance can deepen. For example, people usually discuss grievances with members of their own circle rather than the other party. By drawing in allies, triangulation can compound the initial problem. Social and political cleavages are reinforced and, eventually, open conflict breaks out.

To the extent that regional conflicts are driven by reciprocal fears and misunderstandings, confidence building measures and arms controls can contribute to improving political relations and reducing risks of accidental war (Cottee, 1994: 25).

From this perspective, conflict is essentially irrational. Moreover, once it has emerged, like a disease it develops through distinct stages (Rupesinghe, 1996). Except for cases of clear victory, internal war is typically seen as an evolutionary phenomenon. While terms may differ, it begins with escalation as each side struggles for dominance. Stalemate occurs when forces equalise and become entrenched. Finally, decline sets in as the impossibility of outright victory is slowly accepted by the warring parties (ActionAid, 1996). This evolutionary conception informs the view that conflict resolution should develop techniques and approaches that are appropriate for each stage (Rupesinghe, 1996). That is, methods of mediation designed to prevent, manage or resolve the different antagonisms at point of the evolutionary cycle. Conflict resolution is a good example of solutions springing from the manner in which problems are defined. Moreover, the socio-psychological model involved is capable of further refinement. Saferworld (Cottee, 1994: 16-17), for example, distinguishes eight types of conflict ranging from inter-state war, through various forms of political, secessionist or ethnic civil war, to genocidal conflicts and large-scale loss of life and population displacement. The elaboration of types within an evolutionary framework, at least in theory, allows preventive, management or resolution activities to be better tailored to the circumstances.

The socio-psychological model of conflict rests on an unspoken premise: that the natural state of the world is one of functional harmony. That is, an ideal condition in which a properly adjusted and aware society is synonymous with an optimal balance of resources and power between its competing groups. From this perspective, conflict is an irrational aberration which forces the system out of kilter. Its origins lie at the level of individual or localised misunderstandings and ignorance. Such disagreements, if allowed to develop, lead to instability and war. Conflict is a thing-in-itself; growing and evolving with a certain autonomy from the societal relations that gave rise to it. Conflict resolution derives its conviction from the need to re-establish functional harmony. Intervention becomes a means of "..restoring order
and balance disrupted by conflict (Voutira and Brown, 1995: 16). Once established, the idea of evolutionary stages again appears. That of, post-conflict reconstruction leading to development and the re-establishment of a liberal-democratic future (DAC, 1997).

4.2 COSTING CONFLICT

Agencies working in the field of conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction usually cite the rising incidence of internal war and protracted political crisis as their reason for existing. Such perceived instability demands a response. Many NGOs, however, are critical of the reaction of donor governments and IGOs to the problem. At best, this is seen as ad hoc and halting (Cottey, 1994). In response, agencies and academics have increasingly urged donors to adopt a position of enlightened self-interest with regard to the disease of internal war (Dowty and Leoscher, 1996). Arguments concerning the interdependence of global events and the alleged economic and political costs to the West of external instability are central to this position (George, 1992).

"...there is no way of isolating oneself from the effects of gross violations abroad: they breed refugees, exiles, and dissidents who come knocking at our doors – and we must choose between bolting the doors, thus increasing misery and violence outside, and opening them, at some cost to our own well being (Hoffman, 1981: 111)

Although internal wars may appear far away, it is argued that they have significant direct and indirect cost implications for the West. These are separate from the deaths and misery involved. Refugees flows, for example, impose burdens both on the international community and the receiving country, including social security budgets in the West. Moreover, humanitarian and peace-keeping operations are themselves extremely expensive and often present major extrication problems once committed. At the same time, there are indirect costs. For example, loss of trade and disruption of markets, together with the environmental damage that can result from conflict and large-scale population displacement. There are also threats. As well as regional destabilisation, refugee and displaced populations often foment international terrorism. The destruction of medical services, coupled with population movement, is also seen as a growing health hazard.

It is on the basis of such dysfunctions that the case for donor self-interest is built. It supports the main resolution argument that proactive and preventive intervention is better than reactive humanitarian aid. In this respect, it is interesting that cost arguments usually eschew issues of ethics or justice. In some cases, consciously so. Urging self-interest in terms of cost-benefit calculations is regarded as a more hard-nosed and professional spur to donor action (Dowty and Loescher, 1996).
It is undoubtedly the case that internal war does involve costs and the countries of the world are interdependent. It is also true, however, that the cost argument rests largely on supposition. The most exhaustive attempt so far to estimate the costs of conflict using the above framework has been that of Saferworld (Cranna, 1994). The resulting report is, at best, disappointing. Many of the factors involved are multilevel, globalised or qualitative processes which do not lend themselves to simple cost-benefit accounting. A situation which forced the editor to present the material anecdotally in terms of seven disconnected country case studies. No overall synthesis was possible. In the last analysis, the thrust of the cost argument is that internal war is both an additional welfare burden and an economic loss to the West. When total aid budgets are declining while the core regions of the world economy continue to grow — indeed, the wealth gap between these areas and the global periphery is accelerating — this argument lacks conviction. At the same time, the argument is unable to address the grow of post-modern war economies linked to globalised forms of parallel and grey economic activity discussed above. Despite the instability implied, in many areas in the South continuing economic activity has only been possible through the privatisation of protection.

In the last analysis, however, the aim of the cost-benefit approach is not to promote an analytical understanding of war economies. It is to encourage a more interventionist approach on the part of Western governments. That this appears to be waning compared to several years ago, would indicate a lack of success.

4.3 THE PRIMACY OF EARLY WARNING AND PREVENTIVE ACTION

Following the analogy with disease, early intervention prior to open conflict developing is seen has having more chance of success compared to later involvement. At the same time, it can significantly reduce the cost of conflict and avoids difficult choices once war is entrenched.

Conflicts are usually easiest to resolve at an early stage in their evolution, before opposing positions have hardened (Cottey, 1994: 22).

This view pervades the field of conflict resolution, indeed, of aid policy generally: it constitutes its common-sense. It should be pointed out, however, that the claims for preventive action relate directly to the socio-psychological model that is used. Conflict has its origins in the irrationality of individual misunderstandings and their propensity for violent extrapolation. The logic of this model is that political violence has localised beginnings; a starting point, before which conflict did not exist. Like a disease, the harmful effects of political violence can be neutralised by early remedial action.

Support for conflict early warning systems is an important part of conflict resolution. Echoing the reliance on a
natural disaster model, the general approach is similar to that which developed in the mid 1980s in relation to drought and famine. In this case, the collection of economic stress indicators, such as, unseasonable population movements, changes in the price of livestock and grain, sale of assets, and so on. These indicators, it is argued, can be used to predict localised shortages and trigger compensatory measures to prevent these developing into famine. Conflict resolution agencies have argued that this model can be applied to war. The main modification being that political rather than economic stress indicators should be collected. Boutros Ghali's Agenda for Peace (1992), in calling for a UN conflict early warning system, is widely regarded has giving impetus to the attempt to extend such an approach to the level of internal political relations.

Early warning depends on developing systems which will indicate where and when conflicts are likely to occur (Cottey, 1994: 19). Ideally, early warning aims to predict trends which can then be used to initiate preventive action. While the UN is regarded as best playing an umbrella and synthesising role, following the alleged comparative advantages of NGOs (being close to the ground, and so on) they are seen as playing the main role in actually gathering information and establishing local networks (Rupesinghe, 1996 May). The use of Email and the Internet is regarded has having great potential in this respect. Attempting to establish conflict early warning systems has also prompted an, as yet, unresolved discussion on what political indicators to collect and the need for standardisation (IA, 1995 August).

The aim of an early warning system is to initiate a remedial response. Some agencies, for example, International Alert, have positioned themselves to the fore in the attempt to develop techniques of preventive and multi-track diplomacy. It should be mentioned here, however, that while many agencies have urged the need for a comprehensive early warning system, in practice, application has been fragmented and patchy. The Department of Humanitarian Affairs, for example, has initiated an information exchange network. At the same time, ActionAid has established an information gathering and exchange system covering Central Africa. Similar information exchange systems exist for other unstable regions. There a great qualitative differences, however, between the type of material collected. Questions of agency ownership, differing mandates and conflicting NGO interests have also undermined, so far at least, the emergence of a more standardised and comprehensive system (Rupesinghe, 1996 May).

Apart from problems associated with establishing early warning systems, another practical consideration is the poor and equivocal history of Western response to known humanitarian threats. Early warning rests on the assumption that donor governments will react when told. That is, the problem is seen as being a lack of information. To cite but one example, the West's delay and indecision in relation to compelling evidence of the growing danger of genocide in Rwanda should urge caution (Adelman, et al, 1996). Bosnia, moreover, in
terms of human rights violations has been the most monitored conflict in the history of warfare. Even down to the timing and trajectories of individual mortar shells. This information, however, did little to prevent several years of systematic and gross human rights abuse. The unevenness of aid responses to conflict situations is examined in more detail in Section Six.

The idea of early warning also tends to assume the political authority in the affected country is a benign construct. It reflects continuum thinking in this respect. That is, southern rulers pursue inclusive welfare strategies that operate for the greater good. In other words, they will support any preventive measures that arise from early warning. If there are problems, this is due to institutional weakness rather than the emergence of new forms of political authority that challenge this assumption. Post-modern conflict, however, is not based on this assumption. Even with so-called natural disasters, the political difficulties and pitfalls in attempting to establish famine early warning systems during the 1980s tends to qualify the benign and responsive view of the state (Eldridge and Rydjiski, 1988).
5. RESPONDING TO INTERNAL WAR

5.1 INTERVENING IN UNRESOLVED POLITICAL CRISSES

During the 1980s, development problems were redefined in terms of internal failings. The practical application of this redefinition, however, has largely depended on the end of the Cold War. Since 1989, a crucial aspect of this application has been a new found ability of the UN, IGOs and NGOs to work on all sides in situations of unresolved conflict and political crisis (Duffield, 1994 Oct). Prior to this veritable revolution, concerns about sovereignty and non-interference had precluded such intervention as a widespread option (Goulding, 1993). Aid mainly flowed through the medium of recognised governments and helped cement Cold War alliances (Griffin, 1991).

There are examples, such as, Kurdistan and Somalia, where aid intervention has taken place without the prior agreement of local political actors. Such cases, however, are the exception rather than the rule. Working in ongoing or unresolved political crises has usually been achieved on the basis of aid agencies, mainly the UN or other IGOs, negotiating formal access to civilian populations through agreement with the conflicting parties. Apart from people, this type of access has also developed in relation to civic institutions. Beginning in Africa in the late 1980s, negotiated access spread to European East during the early 1990s. While actual arrangements have tended to be ad hoc, humanitarian variants include Sudan, Angola, Ethiopia, Bosnia and Rwanda. In terms of civic institutions, the expanding OSCE programme of electoral support in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union can be cited (OSCE, 1995). Western intervention of this nature has created a major expansion opportunity for both international and local NGOs. Most of these programmes are based on prior multiparty and cross-cutting agreements linking local political actors, opposition movements and international agencies (Duffield, 1994 Oct). For southern rulers they represent an important aspect of globalisation. That is, the increasing importance of supranational intermediaries in relation to the redefinition of political and state authority.

The collapse of the Cold War has allowed the emergence of such internal or 'cross-line' type operations. Without superpower rivalry it is easier for IGOs to broker agreements with southern rulers or between conflicting parties. At the same time, the loss of Cold War patronage and its associated development aid has often made such groups more dependent on the humanitarian or reconstruction assistance that characterises current integrated programmes. In this respect, in terms of ruler survival strategies, contemporary aid programmes can be compared to the commercial activities of foreign companies discussed above. Whereas one operates in the commercial field, the other relates to welfare. That the later has become increasingly important relates to both the erosion of state competence and the high social which some
political and commercial survival strategies exact. Indeed, due to political conditionality, and limited parallel commercial opportunities or diaspora contributions, relief or other basic assistance can be an important form of external resource in some unstable regions, for example, South Sudan.

5.2 CONDITIONAL SOVEREIGNTY

Although the level and quality of humanitarian intervention is very uneven, as a result of the complex changes following the end of the Cold War it has quietly become an expected response, indeed, a de facto norm, in relation to internal conflict and large-scale refugee flows. While not always operationalised, perceptions of sovereignty have also hardened.

...a state's freedom from external intervention is now understood to end when its domestic actions (or inactions) begin to impinge significantly on other states (Dowty and Loescher, 1996: 45).

While the current phase of Western intervention has been associated with an erosion of absolute sovereignty (Boutros-Ghali, 1992), it should be emphasised that it is still largely dependent upon the agreement of southern rulers. This has meant that a globalised or conditional form of sovereignty has been reasserted within areas of protracted crisis. The nature of this conditionality is indicated by the dual role that negotiated access bestows on local political regimes. In relation to internal war, it is understood by international welfare intermediaries that southern rulers often directly responsible for widespread suffering and population displacement. At the same time, however, within the new aid paradigm the notion of state responsibility has been broadened.

Governments...must not only be held to account for actions which force people to seek sanctuary in other countries [they] also must be encouraged to create the conditions which will allow refugees to return to their homeland (UNHCR, 1995: 43).

In the words of OECD’s Development Assistance Committee,

Developing countries are ultimately responsible for their own development. This cardinal principle of development co-operation must be respected - even in countries in crisis, and even when division is rife and local capacities are severely weakened. The task of international assistance is to help strengthen a country's indigenous capacities. This must be done in ways that are even-handed and that encourage broad participation throughout society (DAC, 1997 May: 2).

The perquisites for a resumption of development lie within the liberal-democratic model of free markets supported by a facilitator-state kept in line by a pluralistic and democratic civil society. This model is now hegemonic in the West.
(Schuurman, 1993). Not only does it inform internal social discourse in Western countries, it pervades all aspects of external aid. As we have seen above, it shapes current thinking on the provision of humanitarian relief, on how social reconstruction should be approached, together with providing a framework in which the long-term security of the West is conceived.

5.3 PROJECTISING CIVIL SOCIETY

As a social construct, aid policy in relation to conflict and social reconstruction is a largely self-contained entity. It is constructed from several complementary assumptions regarding economic scarcity and weak institutions. These assumptions, moreover, are not derived from an analysis of its object, that is, post-modern conflict. Rather, they are informed by an evolutionist model of society which assumes conflict to be irrational and abnormal. A setback on the default course of all societies towards liberal-democracy. This discussion paper has attempted to construct an alternative view of conflict. That is, based on globalisation, the transformation and state authority and the emergence of innovative and long-term ruler survival strategies. For aid policy ‘internal war’ usually makes its appearance in the form of several paragraphs at the beginning of a document. These statements serve as a frame for the technical recommendations that follow logically from them. Some solutions aim at correcting perceived imbalances resulting from economic scarcity. Other than humanitarian assistance, however, the new aid paradigm is not concerned with large-scale resource redistribution per se. This means that practical responses are largely aimed at correcting process or institutional weaknesses. These solutions variously attempt to bring what is divided together and to establish capacities that can mediate differences and manage change in scarce environments. The guiding principle in this process of behavioural change is to help people and governments to ‘help themselves’.

The above discussion of continuum thinking, has already established the theoretical basis for aid agency response. That is, conflict and violence within today’s internal wars is made to appear as somehow separate from society. It is not like the conflict associated with past inter-state wars. These were often the agent of organic social change and concerned with struggles for democracy and freedom. However, regarding today’s conflicts,

...there are notable shifts in the locations and type of wars that raises serious questions about war’s inevitability and about its appropriateness as an instrument for achieving justice (Anderson, 1996: 8).

The only people who gain from this new type of conflict are a motley collection of thugs, irreconcilables, arms merchants, profiteers and aid workers who find jobs through such wars (Ibid: 12). Separating conflict from social and political change in this way reflects the neo-liberal dichotomy between
'state' and 'society'. It part of the argument which sees 'civil society' as opposing the 'state' and acting as a balance or check on its activities. This new type of conflict is regarded as abnormal in relation to the natural tendencies within civil society.

In countries divided by inter-group conflicts, certain elements of civil society may be able to play an important role in building bridges between polarised groups, promoting dialogue and reconciliation (DAC, 1997: 37).

In post-modern conflict, however, there is no dichotomy between state and society. Innovative southern rulers politicise the whole of society. New political networks and linkages with supra and subnational intermediaries restructure social space. Civil society becomes an extension of the state. In Sudan, for example, the rules and regulations that the government has introduced to regulate the activities of international NGOs clearly indicate that they regard the voluntary organisations as parastatal bodies (Karim, et al., 1996). Conventional aid policy, however, is based on the belief that civil society is, and can be, separate from the state. Civil society therefore has become the main focus of aid policy's attempts to correct institutional weakness. It is a position that rests on the premise that the natural condition of society is one of functional harmony. Conflict, associated with irrational statist and non-statist elements force the system out of balance. Aid policy rests on the belief that one can somehow separate militias or warring parties from the normal institutions of society. More particularly, given the correct support and training, civil society can isolate such elements and restore ordered development. Even aid workers can learn to "do no harm" (Anderson, 1996). The implicit evolutionism within aid policy tends to order things in stages, for example, initial peace, war (escalation, stalemate and decline), return of peace (rehabilitation, reconstruction, development), and so on. Its core assumptions, however, have tended to produce a sameness in terms of the types of response.

Many of the measures for conflict prevention and peacebuilding may also be useful in reaching durable peace after a violent conflict (DAC, 1997 May: 2).

The discussion on the continuum has already indicated how relief and development concerns have also merged. In a similar fashion, development and transitional agendas have become interchangeable. It seems somewhat paradoxical that while the number of operational aid instruments has increased in the past decade (Duffield, 1997), the scope of aid policy and its relation with the South appears to have narrowed. Indeed, it has reached the stage now where even a single project can simultaneously embody a range of goals.

It is often possible to reconcile within the same activity short and long-term objectives and to address
simultaneously the needs of relief, improved disaster preparedness and development (DAC, 1997: 32).

While authors of the DAC report no doubt think that this is a policy advance, in actuality, when terms can be combined in this manner it reflects that they have lost all meaning. Indeed, increasingly for most of these activities the only difference is the budget heading from which they are funded. Even funding mechanisms, however, are being streamlined and reduced in number.

5.4 CO-OPERATIVE INTEGRATION

Rather than examining the practical application of aid policy in relation to the alleged stages of conflict, it is more useful to unpack the implications of the socio-psychological model involved. From this perspective one can distinguish social and psychological forms of practical involvement which apply the same logic regardless of the situation or alleged stage involved. This social logic has been called “co-operative integration” (CMI, 1997: 34). It involves bringing people or groups together through the creation of superordinate goals, opportunities or incentives. The opportunities thereby created will help resolve problems and antagonisms.

By working together to achieve a common aim, patterns of co-operation and mutual confidence will be generated that serve to overcome the original conflict (Ibid).

This functionalist approach, developed within sociology and political science, is premised on the view that conflict destroys the natural harmony or balance within society. Co-operative interventions therefore help to re-integrate the whole.

From the standpoint of policy making and social engineering, the aim of different policies is to provide structures of incentives for different groups as political and social actors with a view towards changing the ethnic balance of rewards and opportunities (Voutira and Brown, 1995: 12).

As Voutira and Brown have pointed out, this approach has a great deal in common with Western race relations and multiculturalism. Within aid policy it finds a very wide application. Since the mid 1980s, for example, ‘peace corridors’ agreed between warring parties have been commonly regarded as devices that can help bring both sides together. An NGO consultant discussing the possibility of opening a land route to Juba, South Sudan, sums up the rationale. It represented,

...a measure which would force both sides to look at the same issue and therefore could be used as a vehicle to eventually promote direct contact between them (Kozlowski, 1991, quoted in Duffield, et al, 1995: 21)
The formation of the UN’s Operation Lifeline Sudan (1989) and its Special Relief Programme for Angola (1990) were greatly influenced by such views (Duffield, 1994 March: 34-35). Apart from providing relief in war zones, during the early 1990s, negotiated access programmes were widely regarded as an opportunity for “humanitarian diplomacy” (CMI, 1997: 26). In the case of South Sudan, by the mid 1990s, due to escalating hostilities the idea of OLS as means of conflict resolution had been abandoned. So to had attempts to establish fixed corridors in favour of more flexible means of access (Karim, et al, 1996). Nevertheless idea of co-operative integration continues to be widely applied within the UN system. For example, UNESCO’s Culture of Peace Programme attempts to bring warring parties together on the basis of shared identities or histories. It is also in evidence in UNICEF’s promotion of the Convention of the Rights of the Child. The supposition here is that the primacy of child welfare is something that transcends social or political divisions (Pupavac, 1997).

The logic of co-operative integration clearly reflects and complements the conventional understanding of internal war. That is, as stemming from ignorance, misunderstanding or communication breakdown. By creating opportunities or issues to bring parties together, aid agencies can contribute to promoting peace. The paternalism, if not racism, in this approach should be self-evident. Despite this reservation, however, as an approach, co-operative integration is practically ubiquitous among NGOs and aid agencies. In the form of a myriad different projects one finds a wide application across a range of circumstances and situations. While operational details may differ, each project endlessly reproduces the logic of integrative co-operation.

Consciously or not, these NGOs typically base their work on a sociological theory of integrative co-operation which holds that by working together to achieve a common aim, preferably a concrete task, the parties will generate confidence and mutual trust that transcend their conflicting interests. For many NGOs involved in rehabilitation projects, this appears as a natural and relatively simple extension of traditional activity (CMI, 1997: 50).

That for many NGOs working in conflict situations, integrative co-operation appears as an extension of their traditional activity is a testament to the emergence of developmental relief. Stated in a different way, when faced with conflict related humanitarian disasters, aid policy has changed very little. This is despite the alleged comparative advantage of NGOs, that is, their being close to the ground and able to reflect grass-root opinion (DAC, 1997). This advantage projected aid does not appear to be able to distinguish prevention from resolution, relief from development, or indeed, multiculturalism from reconstruction. As noted above, a stage has been reached in which single projects are often regarded as simultaneously embodying all of these activities.
NGO projects based on integrative co-operation are legion. Before some typical cases are described, it is worth considering this approach in relation to the economic scarcity view of conflict. That is, poverty and economic crisis leading to conflict. While accepting this position, aid policy is not concerned with large-scale North to South resource redistribution. Aid through NGOs, however, can be seen as a form of projectised or small-scale resource redistribution. These resources often provide the structure or incentive base for integrative co-operation. That is, they are the means whereby NGOs are attempting to change behaviour and attitudes and effect change at the level of processes and institutions. This logic of co-operative integration can be widely duplicated (see Anderson, 1996: 24-27; DAC, 1997: 48-50). For example,

- NGOs provide scarce resources provided that different communities manage these resources collectively
- NGOs support parallel projects in different communities which are urged to co-operate on issues of mutual concern
- bringing community representative together to discuss how each is coping with a shared problem
- encouraging the formation of joint groups to work on shared problems
- encouraging productive activity where different parts of the final product are produced by different groups
- NGOs openly hiring staff from different groups
- establish shared facilities, for example, clinics or advice centres, along community boundary lines
- using co-operative integration projects to help reintegrate returning refugees

In many different ways, the logic of projectised aid is to provide a space for people and groups to meet, establish structures where different views can be given a voice, provide incentives for co-operation, and so on. By working in this way, moreover, aid agencies can avoid the disincentives and other negative qualities of humanitarian assistance as they learn to do no harm.

With sufficient understanding of the patterns by which aid can make tensions worse and with imagination and open-thinking, aid workers may be able to come up with new approaches for the delivery of assistance that will not feed into, reinforce and exacerbate existing conflicts (Anderson, 1996: 27)

The problem, however, is that they are not new but an endless repetition of a single logic. A logic, moreover, that derives from a restricted understanding of conflict as an abnormal event that stems from ignorance and communication breakdown.
Nevertheless, such views are influential and presently dominate aid policy (e.g., DAC, 1997). That it has shifted the focus of humanitarian aid from people to processes and institutions will be discussed below in relation to conditionality and humanitarian assistance.

5.5 THE PSYCHOLOGY OF CONFLICT

Complementing social co-operative integration, the model of conflict employed by aid policy also supports more direct psychological interventions. Based on the view that conflict stems from misunderstandings and ignorance, such measures are directed toward re-establishing confidence and trust between different groups. There are at least two main psychologically orientated approaches. First, the arranging appropriate conferences and workshops that bring people from different ethnic groups or countries together. Usually with a facilitator, such events allow perceptions and individual attitudes to be explored and discussed (Lantz, 1995). Such meetings can be aimed at so-called opinion formers or members of the general public. The audience usually depends on the focus of the NGO involved. Second, and perhaps the more clearly psychological, involves training in conflict resolution skills based on clarifying mistaken perceptions and providing psychological and inter-personal tools for defusing potentially tense situations.

By way of illustrating conflict resolution training, the work of Mercy Corp (MC) and World Vision International (WVI) in Bosnia will be briefly considered (Duffield, 1996 November). The approach of both these international NGOs is very similar. Conflict resolution, for example, was recently added to their physical rehabilitation and reconstruction programmes involving displaced centres and schools respectively. Training is aimed at either the local managers or school teachers working within these establishments. Such people are regarded as ‘opinion formers’ and capable of influencing the wider situation. What is also noteworthy is that both NGOs are using problem solving techniques that have been patented by different American academics whose experience derives from the business world. For WVI, the intention is,

"to teach what we call ‘life skills’ to the teachers. They are mainly common sense things like creating a partnership atmosphere [between potentially hostile groups], redefining problems as joint problems, clarifying the perceptions of A and B, focusing on the individual in the group, developing power ‘with’ rather than power ‘against’ scenarios, and so on (Quoted by Duffield, 1996 Nov: 38).

Using a similar approach, MC sees its role as getting the collective centre managers “..to see the other side”, and to give them the skills “..to get through the day” (Ibid).

It is interesting that both church and secular oriented NGOs use more or less the same skill training techniques. There is an affinity between psychology and the dynamics of saving
soles. They both follow a similar trajectory from cognitive dissonance or despair through to harmony or enlightenment. While the mode of delivery may differ, the content of the training sessions is very similar (cf, Greek, 1995). Skill training usually takes the form of a concentrated immersion within the socio-psychological model of conflict and its derived implications. By exploiting small group dynamics and manipulating peer group pressure, the aim is to produce conformity and agreement. In this respect, indoctrination may be a more apt term than training.

Conflict resolution training locates the origin of political violence at the level of flawed perceptions and communication breakdowns. Its logic is that conflict and its associated abuses are somehow all a mistake. Not only does this approach have difficulty in viewing conflict as a rational political act, it also has a more subversive aspect. Ultimately, since conflict results from individual failings, both the perpetrators and victims of violence are similarly affected by distorted views (Pupavac, 1997). In a sense, we are all as bad as each other and everyone is a victim. Not only are ideas of justice undermined, conflict resolution training becomes something that is good for all people and groups. Since, however, it is unusual for NGOs to have access to the actual perpetrators of sectarian violence, more often than not, such training takes place among the victims and general public (Voutira and Brown, 1995). Moreover, despite the efforts of non-violent education, within conflict situations direct experience tends to contradict the message of the trainers.

..for all the peace education initiatives in former Yugoslavia, the use of force is seen as having been the actual way of dealing with conflict. Whilst people may have been involved in internationally funded non-violent conflict resolution programmes, they were aware of the demands in the West for UN and US military intervention and they witnessed it being successful or even morally justified. It was Serbian armed forces which took Srebrenica and elsewhere, it was the Croatian and Bosnian armies that took Krajina and Western Bosnia, and it was the power of the US army, not non-violent conflict resolution initiatives that resulted in the Dayton Agreement (Pupavac, 1997: 15).

Conflict resolution training, with its focus on individual perceptions and its tendency to treat everyone as a victim, represents little serious threat to those in power. While providing Western donors with the belief that they are doing something, it also has the advantage of being relatively cheap. Training projects, for example, can be run by people who are without professional qualifications and, themselves, often the product of a short training workshop. Finally, the approach also has a useful blame the victim quality. If, after all, future violence is not averted - those being trained must not have paid attention in class.
The formal position of most northern governments is that humanitarian assistance is unconditional. That is, providing access is available, it is given freely and according to need, and is not subject to the political character of the authorities concerned. Few politicians or aid agencies, for example, would publicly advocate cutting humanitarian assistance to civilians as a result of abuse by local political or military actors. While this long-standing position continues to provide a formal framework, the post-Cold War changes in aid policy have had a significant effect. For decades, northern foreign policy has shaped development assistance. Although changed in form, this has continued into the present period with the toughening of political conditionality toward the end of the 1980s. The subsequent merging of relief and development under the pressure of continuum and capacity building arguments has been influenced by this hardening. While the formal position remains unchanged, the blurring effect of developmental relief has contributed to humanitarian assistance becoming a more indistinct, equivocal and contested activity.

During the Cold War, relief and development were considered as separate activities. The former related to short-term assistance to allow societies to overcome temporary external shocks, such as, drought or floods. The latter concerned long-term assistance to help societies modernise their infrastructures and economies. That this separation had a political as well as technical dimension is well illustrated in relation to American aid to Ethiopia (Duffield and Prendergast, 1994: 36-37). In 1975, a pro-Soviet military coup ousted the government of Haile Selassie. The Dergue proceeded to strengthen its position through a wave of purges and terror. In 1977, the Carter Administration adopted a new policy of human rights advocacy in relation to Ethiopia. Following problems over payment for the supply of past military equipment, the Brooke Amendment forbade all American bilateral non-humanitarian assistance. In response to the nationalisation of American property by the Dergue, this was further reinforced in 1980 by the Hickenlooper Amendment. The American government also opposed the World Bank and African Development Bank giving loans to Ethiopia. It did, however, continue to provide humanitarian assistance throughout this period. This allowed the Americans to play an important role in the famine that developed in Ethiopia from 1983. Moreover, from 1985, American humanitarian assistance became increasingly significant in the clandestine cross-border relief operation that then operated from Sudan into the non-government areas of Eritrea and Tigray.

The evidence is that the American decision to maintain relief assistance to Ethiopia, indeed, to substantially increase it during the mid 1980s, stemmed primarily from humanitarian concerns. The distinction between relief and development, however, did have a useful political sub-text. While satisfying the humanitarian imperative, during the Cold War it
also allowed the West to maintain an involvement in countries regarded as within the Soviet sphere of influence. The end of the Cold War has changed this situation. For example, the political need for a distinction between relief and development has disappeared. Aid policy has increasingly focused on the character of internal relations and institutions. A rectification reinforced by political conditionality. At the same time, while a formal commitment to unconditional humanitarian assistance remains, the emergence of developmental relief has tended to shift the focus from people to processes and institutions. By default, the space formally occupied by humanitarian assistance has increasingly found itself subject to forms of conditionality.

Humanitarian conditionality has three main elements. First, the inadequacy of humanitarian assistance which questions the link between need and response. Second, the erosion of legal frameworks and formal criteria in favour of ad hoc relief interventions which are increasingly dependent for their operation on donor calculations of political interest. Finally, development relief has radically changed the definition of what constitutes an 'emergency'. Conditions that a decade ago would have prompted a relief intervention are today regarded as a development opportunity. The losers in this situation have been the so-called beneficiaries.

6.1 UNEVENNESS AND INADEQUACY OF RESPONSE

In the decade following the mid 1980s relief and humanitarian expenditure entered a period of unprecedented increase. While indications are that this growth has now peaked, this period saw a six fold increase in spending (excluding the cost of food-aid and peacekeeping). While this growth has often received comment, less attention has been paid to its extremely uneven character. Per capita relief expenditure in so-called complex emergencies differs greatly. This unevenness, however, is not easily related to any objective estimate of need. For example, expenditure in Iraq has been $289/beneficiary while in the former Yugoslavia it was $140. In South Sudan and Angola corresponding figures were $18 and $8 respectively (Minear and Weiss, 1993). Despite the devastation in such places as Afghanistan and Liberia, compared to other emergencies, they appears almost forgotten. With regard to UN electoral support, the marked contrast between the healthy expenditure in Namibia, for example, and the shoe-string exercise in Angola during the early 1990s has attracted comment (Vines, 1993). Perhaps, the most glaring current example, however, is the creation to the Dayton peace process, with its related civil and security infrastructures, in Bosnia at the same time as the same northern governments were prevaricating and limiting there involvement in the unfolding crisis in central Africa.

Unevenness not only exists between relief programmes, it terms of differing response rates to need based appeals, it also exists within them. While there are exceptions, appeals for relief assistance do not achieve their target. Moreover, there has been a creeping acceptance among donors and aid
agencies of this more or less permanent failure of response. For example, in relation to the 26 complex emergencies covered by UN appeals in 1993, on average only 57% of the appeal was being covered (UN, 1993 Oct 8). Persistent response failure has had a number of effects, including allegations of UN 'shroud waving' to gain public attention (Hertsgaard, 1992 Apr 12). At the same time, the reality of underfunded emergency appeals has bred a cynicism among some donor governments. That is, although appeals are only partially met, mass breakdown and visible suffering seldom, if ever, occurs. The estimated needs must therefore have been exaggerated. Despite the absence of any forms of monitoring system which could adjudicate on the matter, there is evidence that northern governments consciously pitch their responses below estimated need in order to test the water (Karim, et al, 1996). The ultimate aim being to bring down inherently inflated relief budgets to more 'realistic' levels. Unevenness and inadequacy of response are all symptoms of indirect or hidden humanitarian conditionality. How this form of conditionality works is discussed below.

6.2 CONSENSUS AND POST-MODERN AID

In the transition from Cold War to post-Cold War periods, the international humanitarian system has changed radically. The historical legacy of this transition, together with the new potentialities that have emerged can be seen in the current debate on humanitarianism (CMI, 1997). At the risk of oversimplification, this can be represented in the contrast between 'neutrality' versus 'solidarity'. The former is typically associated with the ICRC. That is, an approach based on neutrality in relation to the warring parties and, grounded in international humanitarian law, attempts to ameliorate the effects of conflict for the civilians concerned. Humanitarian law is largely the construct of an earlier state-centric international system. Globalisation and the emergence of post-modern forms of conflict has undermined both the applicability and enforceability of many legal tenets. Solidarity forms of humanitarianism are varied. Unlike neutrality, they usually see their actions in terms of attempts to resolve conflict. At one extreme, there is apolitical developmental relief and support for capacity building and civil society projects based on co-operative integration. At the other, are more overtly political forms of solidarity with the victims of conflict, both against their national political and international aid oppressors (African Rights, 1994). Moreover, rather than based on legal principles, solidarity interventions rely more on ad hoc measures and organisational forms. For example, the large integrated UN led humanitarian operations that emerged in Iraq, Somalia and Bosnia, were based on ad hoc Security Council resolutions. Rather than an extension of existing international law, such interventions have tended to challenge its central precepts.
The following idealised table summarises some of the main differences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cold War</th>
<th>Post-Cold War</th>
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<tr>
<td>Neutrality re Parties</td>
<td>Solidarity re Victims</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimalist Relief</td>
<td>Developmental Relief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict Amelioration</td>
<td>Conflict Resolution</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inter-State Conflict</td>
<td>Post-Modern Conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Principles</td>
<td>Ad Hoc Mechanisms</td>
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If one could summarise the key difference between now and the Cold War period, it is that ad hoc mechanisms are replacing legal principles within the international arena. This is not to imply that one is necessarily better than the other, simply that they represent two different systems. The ad hoc character of the present period is reflected in the neomedieval metaphor. State authority is being redefined under the influence of globalisation and the emergence of a whole new range of supra and subnational pressures. Not only is post-modern conflict taking place within southern states, its often deliberate high social cost goes beyond current legal principles. At the same time, the state system that, in theory, should enforce these principles is being reconstructed anew. Government is transforming into governance networks associated with entropy.

Grounded on a series of ad hoc UN resolutions, a wide range of new operational tools and coordinating bodies has emerged within the international relief system (Duffield, 1997). The growth of NGOs since the 1980s, in conjunction with a largely deregulated aid market, has been a central element. At the same time, attempts at greater co-ordination within the UN system have produced large integrated relief operations in situations of ongoing conflict. The growing complexity of aid and security subcontracting has seen military assets incorporated within some of these operations. Due to the linkages, networks and cross-cutting ties within such structures, together with their strategic nature, they are a good example of the move from government to governance within globalisation.

The organisational structure of post-modern aid contains a wide range of decision making networks, some of which are in competition. It is also characterised by entropy. Rather than based on legal principle or humanitarian need, actions are dependent on consensus among decision making networks. In the last analysis, while globalisation may have eroded the competence of individual nation states; donor governments, in the form of cross-cutting governance structures, are still the prime movers within the present ad hoc aid system. Stated in another way, this system and its tools are no longer set in motion by legal principle or states acting in isolation, but by consensus being reached within northern government networks and co-ordinating bodies.

A good example concerns the UN’s Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS). This relief operation was established in 1989, and was
the first of the contemporary negotiated access programmes. Without using military protection, it is based upon the agreement of the warring parties allowing aid agencies access to civilian populations. Apart from access never being complete, a recent review of OLS has indicated that the consent of the warring parties is fragile and equivocal (Karim, et al, 1996). Indeed, that the degree of consent is directly related to the extent of donor interest and pressure. The history of OLS can largely be written in terms of how donor pressure has fluctuated. After a wave of initial interest in 1989, it eventually waned. This encouraged growing infringements and intransigence by the warring parties. As a result, OLS had all but collapsed by 1992. Donor pressure rekindled, and with it the fortunes of OLS, during the short period of New World Order optimism following the Gulf War. By 1995, however, in the wake of disappointments in Somalia and Bosnia and the seemingly intractable nature of the war in Sudan, donor interest again declined. OLS has once more drifted into deepening crisis.

Northern governments have, of course, always been central to motivating the international humanitarian system. Donor action, however, takes place today under different circumstances to a generation ago. The decline of legality is perhaps indicated by the growing influence of the media and calculations of self-interest in shaping political will. In some respects, the media in the North has now become a self-appointed judge and jury of humanitarian intervention. Douglas Hurd, a former British Foreign Secretary, smarting under media criticism of British policy in Bosnia perceptively commented,

The searchlight of media coverage is not the regular sweep of a lighthouse. It is patchy, dwelling on some rocks only briefly, on others at length (Hurd, 1993 Sept 17).

While politicians are forced to note the emergencies that the media illuminates, the case of Bosnia would suggest that a strong media coverage does not automatically mean donor intervention. Where the calculation of self-interest is strong, governments can sit-out media pressure regarding foreign events. At the same time, when crises are not in the public eye, this factor illustrates the tremendous distance that aid agencies wishing to obtain support have to climb. The issue of the media, however, is also complicated by the growing division of the world, at least from the point of view of the North, into strategic and non-strategic areas. Freedman (1995), for example, has defined the changing nature of conflict in terms of the increasing distinction between “wars of survival” and “wars of choice” for the North. The former are concerned with the defence or expansion of core territory, a defined enemy, and so on. Wars of choice, however, suggests that northern government involvement is increasingly optional. As a result, post-modern conflict in the South is harder to deflect by threat or the art of traditional diplomacy.
Following the problems of Somalia and Bosnia, the North is now wary of involvement in the South (Roberts, 1997). In the present situation, donors are unlikely to become significantly engaged in a protracted political crisis unless a number of criteria are met. For example, the need to protect nationals or direct interests. At the same time, elements of economic or social self-interest have become increasingly important. That is, maintaining the supply of key raw materials, keeping trade routes open, preventing major population movements into the North from crisis regions, and so on.

Social costs might be consequential of significant movements of population from areas of disorder, including those seeking asylum from political persecution to refugees from civil war and economic distress to immigrants seeking a better life (Freedman, 1995).

Increasingly, such self-interest decisions have been taken by regional groupings or northern government decision making networks. Moreover, experience suggests that when such elements are in combination it is difficult for northern politicians to ignore them. In other words, entropy can be overcome. However, many conflicts and protracted crises are occurring in areas where northern self-interest is weak. It is this gradation of choice that is contributing to a differentiation of the world into strategic and non-strategic areas. A development that has been reinforced by the process of regionalisation discussed above. The recent collapse of political authority in Albania, for example, quickly prompted a multilateral ‘humanitarian’ intervention force. That the crisis in Albania is a humanitarian one is debatable. At the same time, international quiescence regarding the situation in the Great Lakes area of central Africa is palpable.

The current aid apparatus is a largely ad hoc and complex organisational system. Rather than based on legal principle or need, its political motivation derives from a lexicon of choice offered northern rulers in a differentiated and fragmented world. At the same time, however, it is also a flexible and adaptive system. The general decline in public spending in the North, at the same time as continuing strategic interests in the South, has underpinned the need for flexibility.

6.3 THE CHANGING DEFINITION OF EMERGENCY

What exactly constitutes an emergency has long been an issue of debate and disagreement among aid agencies. It is not intended here to detail this history. The main point to be made is that the current dominance of developmental relief has had a major effect on changing perceptions. While perhaps overstated, situations that a decade ago were regarded as warranting relief intervention are now seen as an opportunity for rehabilitation and development. For the advocates of developmental relief this is seen as policy progress. It is a move which overcomes the negative effects of humanitarian aid (Anderson, 1996). That is, fuelling conflicts, undermining local capacity, and so on. This
rectification, however, has demanded shifting the focus of relief assistance from one of helping people to supporting processes, institutions and capacity building. This refocusing includes household food security, sustainable economic activities, administrative training, civil society initiatives, and so on. While there is nothing wrong with such capacity building measures, developmental relief’s shift in focus is based upon a specific and debatable understanding of conflict. That is, a view which sees conflict as abnormal and separate from society. It establishes a state versus society dichotomy and sees capacity building and co-operative integration measures in the latter as helping resolve conflict. While such activity remains at best unproven (Voutira and Brown, 1995), it now take precedence over humanitarian interventions aimed just at people.

There are several difficulties with developmental relief. It view of internal war is at variance with the analysis of post-modern conflict developed above. That is, as a long-term and innovative response to globalisation and the erosion of the competence of the nation state. While pursued at a high social cost, southern rulers are able to bring together new international and national intermediaries, reshape clientage networks, and develop parallel activities in their attempts to refashion political authority. Strategies which do not allow a neo-liberal dichotomy between state and society. It is not that developmental relief has a different understanding of conflict. In a sense it has no understanding at all. It makes little or no concessions to the nature of conflict and how it affects people and permeates society. It simply introduces conventional development practices into conflict situations and loudly declares ‘business as usual.’ Rather than contributing to an analysis of internal war, it actually closes off analysis and understanding.

While this is a matter of concern, it is not the main problem. Since development relief shifts the focus from people to institutions, the real losers are the victims of post-modern conflict. That humanitarian assistance is supposed to help people and protect them from suffering and abuse is missing from developmental relief. The humanitarian imperative has been airbrushed from the picture. Mary Anderson’s Do No Harm: Supporting Local Capacities for Peace Through Aid (1996) is a key text of developmental relief and has been influential. Within this work, however, it is significant that you will find no reference to the humanitarian imperative. The omission of the losers in terms of the manner in which political authority is being refashioned in the South is common to the developmental relief genre. People have been replaced by a faith in evolutionist processes and institutions.

Tracing the disappearing beneficiary with aid policy is beyond the scope of this report. It is critical research, however, that is long overdue. All that can be attempted here are a few pointers. Throughout the 1980s, aid agencies commonly used nutritional criteria, that is, measures of wasting and malnutrition, especially among children, as triggers for
relief interventions. While formal benchmarks remained relatively constant, there was a tendency during the 1980s, for malnutrition trigger levels to creep upwards in actual relief programmes. What was seen as an emergency situation at the beginning of the 1980s had hardened to become acceptable background conditions by the end of the decade. Reflecting this rising threshold, during the early 1990s relief agencies began switching from nutritional indicators to crude mortality rates, that is, deaths per 10,000 population per day (ACC/SCN, 1997). This was initially developed by the MSF agencies on the grounds that such measures had greater impact (Young, Per Co rn). This itself, being an indication of rising thresholds and the need to present information in a more arresting manner. Since this change, thresholds, or at least what appear to be acceptable limits, have again continued to rise. During the early part of 1997, for example, according to NGO estimates the Hutu refugee camps in Eastern Zaire, at 300 deaths/10,000/day, have the hapless distinction of being the highest death rate ever recorded. For comparison, a crude mortality rate of above 2 deaths/10,000/day is officially regarded as denoting a situation that is out of control (ACC/SCN, 1997: 4). Of those Hutu refugees recently repatriated to Rwanda, crude mortality rates are estimated as 60/10,000/day. This is higher than in Goma in 1994 during the height of the cholera epidemic (Stockton, Per Co rn). The point of these figures is that while there were exceptions, donor governments resisted becoming directly involved in Eastern Zaire and prevaricated over military intervention. At the same time, there has been little expression of public concern, limited media coverage and no NGO television appeal. This lack of response has to be set against crude mortality rates that even if they are only a rough indication, denote a disaster far in excess of the events in Ethiopia during the mid 1980s. Reflecting the rising threshold of tolerance is the phenomenon of emergencies apparently scaling ever increasing heights of social breakdown. Ethiopia in 1984 was a biblical famine, South Sudan in 1988 plumbed new depths, Somalia in 1992 broke new ground altogether while Rwanda in 1994 still remains incomprehensible. While these emergencies denote untold suffering, they were also happening on a general and rising tide of what are acceptable welfare and security standards. A development which has created an increasingly common anomaly in which refugee and displaced populations, in terms of the basic nutritional, health, water and sanitation resources they receive through international aid agencies, now have levels of welfare in excess of the norm for the surrounding host population. This 'development gap' has been a source of instability in many countries. The trend toward the

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7 As a country director of an NGO operating in Sudan during the latter half of the 1980s, the author witnessed this process at first hand.
8 Such mortality figures are calculated on the basis of actual deaths as a proportion of the total population figures. In areas like East Zaire, population figures are only estimates. Accuracy is therefore suspect. In the case of East Zaire, however, the number of deaths on their own were so high as to indicate an extremely serious situation.
repatriation of refugee populations, against their will if necessary, which has developed since the late 1980s, appears to be the main means of addressing this anomaly.

Developmental relief can be argued to have contributed to the increasing threshold of acceptability. A good example, which can be duplicated, concerns policy evolution within the UN’s Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS). When OLS began in 1989 it was conceived as a cross-line relief operation working in both government and rebel areas. The emergency was seen as a war induced nutritional disaster and provoked a food aid response. A recent review of OLS (Karim, et al, 1996), found that during its seven year history the perception of the emergency by aid agencies within OLS has changed significantly. Reflecting the concerns of developmental relief, by the mid 1990s, rather than a war related nutritional emergency, the situation was being defined institutionally in terms of problems of household food security and lack of local organisational capacity. At the same time, reflecting wider changes, regular nutritional surveys had been dropped by most NGOs in favour of criteria which reflected the new concern. The review team, however, could find no evidence produced by the aid agencies to justify this change. In other words, there was no evidence that the emergency, or the conditions that had given rise to it, has significantly altered. Reflecting changing aid policy and the rapid turnover of personnel, aid agencies had simply altered the way they thought about the crisis. Where nutritional evidence was available, however, it suggested that the situation, especially for the large displaced population living in northern Sudan, had not shifted: they remained extremely vulnerable in a hostile political environment. A similar picture of changing perceptions has been described in Somalia (Bradbury, 1997).

The situation within OLS is not simply one of changing perceptions. Views which are just debating positions among commentators have a direct and immediate impact for the beneficiaries of the relief programmes. In brief, the institutional view of the emergency has prompted a reduction in food aid. For the government of Sudan, which has long regarded the displaced as a source of cheap, indeed, free labour (Duffield, 1990), this reduction is something they have advocated for some time. Anxious to do no harm, aid agencies have gone along with such reductions believing them to be developmental. The position of the displaced, however, has been made even more precarious. A situation reflected in the various incidents of unrest among the displaced following ration reductions in 1996. Desperation and not dependency sparked these incidents. Like the issue of privatisation, this is another example of the symbolic language of northern aid policy articulating with the political and economic strategies of southern rulers.

6.4 RULE-BASED AID PROGRAMMES
Although humanitarian aid, at least formally, continues to be unconditional, this is not the case with developmental relief. Since it shifts the focus from people to institutions, decisions regarding aid curtailment become easier. The example of the changing definition of the crisis within OLS has a wider application in relation to the emergence of rule-based rehabilitation and development programmes.

6.4.1 Somalia

While open fighting or long-term instability persists in many areas of the South, during the course of the 1990s, the trend has been to redefine these protracted crises in terms of rehabilitation and reconstruction needs. Regarding conditionality, this redefinition side-steps the issue of the continuing formal unconditional nature of humanitarian aid. At the same time, however, since has no real analysis of internal war, this redefinition is an act of faith rather than a decision informed by concrete analysis. A good example, concerns the development of the Somali Aid Co-ordination Body (SACB). This is a donor led, international aid liaison body established in February 1994 (SACB, 1996 May). It was created following a joint meeting in Addis Ababa in December 1993 between the international aid community and the warring parties. A meeting that had been prompted by the growing failure of UN intervention. This gathering issued the Addis Ababa Declaration of the Fourth Co-ordination Meeting on Humanitarian Assistance for Somalia (Ibid: Annex 1). While humanitarian assistance still features in the title and the unconditional nature of emergency relief is briefly restated, the six page document is almost entirely concerned with establishing a rule-based framework for rehabilitation and reconstruction assistance. The Declaration itself, like the subsequent Code of Conduct, is unsigned. There are two central elements to the framework established. First, the importance of a secure environment (not only for reducing risks to aid workers, but also operational costs) and second, the clear role that southern rulers must play in establishing this environment. These factors which are common to rule-based programmes in other countries. Regarding security,

The meeting acknowledged that security and stability are prerequisites for investment in reconstruction and rehabilitation and that the involvement of the respective Somali institutions will render reconstruction and rehabilitation more effective (Ibid).

The importance of peace, or at least, the absence of violence, is important. This condition reflects the focus among conflict resolution aid agencies on outlawing violence per se as a means of social change (Voutira and Brown, 1995). This avoids the thorny issue of justice versus peace. In other words, the quality of the peace is secondary to the main aim of preventing open violence. Regarding the role of southern rulers,

Participants recognised that the reconstruction and rehabilitation effort in Somalia must be founded on the
basic principle of Somali ownership of the process. They agreed that ownership means not only that the Somali people are fully involved in the rehabilitation and reconstruction process, but that they must also bear responsibility for ensuring that the environment is conducive for reconstruction and development (SACB, 1996 May: Annex 1).

The role given southern rulers is reflects the general trend of internalisation within aid policy. That is, for it to measure the character of domestic relations against a liberal-democratic norm. In this case, making Somali rulers responsible for establishing a secure environment also ensures that they take the blame for any termination of aid. As the Declaration goes on to indicate, donors will only provide rehabilitation and reconstruction assistance in areas that meet requirements.

The criteria for aid assistance in Somalia was further clarified in February 1995, more than a year later, in a Code of Conduct for International Rehabilitation and Development Assistance to Somalia. The Code reaffirmed the central importance of security and the role of Somali political actors in guaranteeing this. That is, through eradicating banditry, stopping the kidnapping of aid workers, preventing extortion, bringing criminals to justice, and so on. In providing security, however, some of the Somali warlords introduced Islamic Sharia punishments. In response, a July 1995 Clarification to the Code pointed out,

The international community deplores all cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment associated with the maintenance or promotion of peace and security in Somalia. In the pursuit of peace and security human rights must be observed (Ibid: Annex 2).

The Code, however, is significant since it clearly brings humanitarian aid into the framework of conditionality. That is, subject to security being guaranteed by warlord authorities.

The same principles are also applicable for humanitarian assistance with due regard to its particular nature (Ibid: Annex 2).

In return, donor governments and their international partners are willing to consider rehabilitation and development assistance in areas "where a number of conditions are fulfilled" (Ibid). For their part, international NGOs undertake to respect the culture of the people with whom they work, to be impartial, and to develop a co-ordinated programme.

While the position of humanitarian aid had been ambiguous within the 1993 Declaration, by 1995, the donor-led SACB had folded it into the conditionality governing rehabilitation and development assistance. All external aid had been made subject to ruler compliance on security. This is despite a
situation in which the condition of many ordinary Somali people remains fragile (Bradbury, 1997). Under the logic of internalisation, and the complementary blurring of relief and development, this is now the responsibility of southern rulers, not the international community. From era of interventionism that developed following the famine in Ethiopia during the mid 1980s, aid policy has come a long way.

6.4.2 Afghanistan

Regarding the trend toward humanitarian conditionality, Afghanistan is an interesting case. Reflecting the situation in Somalia, a donor led rule-based approach has emerged governing aid to the Taliban and opposition factions. Rather than a framework document informally agreed with the warring parties, however, here it takes the from of statement issued in October 1996 outlining the Shared Donor Position on Aid Policy in Afghanistan (ODA, 1996: Annex C). Reflecting internalisation and the broadening the notion of ruler responsibility, it is argued that the Taliban have adopted an extreme form of Sharia that is not shared by the majority of the world’s Muslims. This has eroded accepted standards of human rights, especially the rights of women. It is pointed out that while the Taliban have welcomed humanitarian assistance,

...they are sending ambiguous signals as to the extent to which their new regulations will be modified to take account of human rights concerns (Ibid).

In other words, they are jeopardising relief reaching the people they control. This is especially a problem since the main principle of donor assistance is that aid should reach both men and women.

Donors should only support aid programmes which integrate gender concerns and which actively attempt to promote the equitable participation of both men and women (Ibid).

Donors and their international partners are therefore unlikely to provide assistance, including humanitarian assistance, where such participation is absent. While aid agencies may close projects as a result, they are encouraged to maintain their head offices and keep in dialogue with the government. This is because the authorities “may not be aware” of the respective international conventions and human rights norms. Maintaining dialogue is also important for conveying a common message to the rulers that their actions,

...will have a negative practical impact on essential programmes underway to provide urgently needed basic services in demining, water and sanitation, health, food distribution, agricultural and other infrastructural rehabilitation. This will increase the already considerable suffering of ordinary Afghans - men, women, and children (Ibid).
The Taliban position toward women is deplorable and regressive. At the same time, however, one cannot help detect a certain hypocrisy in the donor position. Championing the rights of women so that former commitments regarding unconditional humanitarian aid can be quietly dropped.

6.4.3 South Sudan

Somalia and Afghanistan are examples of informal (not legally binding) donor led rule-based systems shaping conditionality in relation to humanitarian aid. The rule-based system in South Sudan, that is, the system of Ground Rules, is somewhat different. Unlike the above approaches is not donor led but within the southern sector of the UN's Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS) it has been developed by UNICEF. Moreover, unlike the other informal approaches, the Ground Rules are one of the few examples of a rule-based approach which is signed by the UN and non-state opposition movements. That the Ground Rules have any legal status, however, is doubtful since they involve non-state entities (Levine, 1997). Nonetheless, reflecting their greater emphasis on a joint approach, they appear more formal than the other systems reviewed.

The Ground Rules have developed in two phases in South Sudan. The killing of several aid workers by the SPLA at the end of 1992 initiated the first Ground Rules. In some respects these rules reflected the SACB Code of Conduct. That is, they focus on the need for non-state entities to agree to establish a secure working environment for aid agencies. The current Ground Rules, however, were expanded in 1994 by UNICEF and eventually agreed and signed with the two largest rebel movements in South Sudan in mid 1995 (Ibid: Annex 1). Not only do the expanded Ground Rules include an expression of support by non-state signatories for the Geneva Conventions and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, unlike donor led rule-based systems, they emphasise unconditional humanitarian assistance as a fundamental right. According to the SPLM/OLS Agreement on Ground Rules,

The fundamental objective of OLS and [humanitarian wing of opposition movement] is the provision of humanitarian assistance to populations in need wherever they may be. Such humanitarian assistance seeks to save lives, to ease suffering, to promote self-reliance, self-sufficiency and the maintenance of livelihoods. The right to receive humanitarian assistance and to offer it is a fundamental humanitarian principle (Ibid: 26).

This principle is underpinned by neutrality, provision according to need, free access and,

The only constraints on responding to humanitarian need should be those of resources and practicality (Ibid).

9 That is the Sudan Peoples Liberation Movement (SPLM) and the breakaway South Sudan Independence Movement (SSIM).
As Levine (1997), one of the chief architects of the Ground Rules, points out, they attempt to,

...bring together delivery of humanitarian assistance and the protection of civilians as integral and inseparable parts of their mandate (Ibid: 12).

The Ground Rules have tried to maintain the importance of humanitarian principles in war situations. These principles have been lost in institution centred developmental relief. Moreover, as ‘emergencies’ have been redefined as ‘rehabilitation’, donor rule-based systems have, in effect, extended conditionality to humanitarian assistance. In this respect, the Ground Rules now look increasingly out of step with the main trends within aid policy. At the same time, however, the Ground Rules have incorporated elements of developmental relief. That is, the humanitarian wings of signatory partners, as formal members of OLS, are eligible for capacity building support. This incorporation, however, indicates a contradiction at the heart of the Ground Rules. That is, while attempting to regulate the nature of internal war, reflecting the dubious ‘state’ versus ‘society’ dichotomy of conventional aid policy, it is also pledged to strengthen institutions that are part of the war economy in South Sudan.

The main difficulty with the Ground Rules, however, is that despite being a signed undertaking, experience has shown them to be unenforceable. Despite significant attempts at dissemination, political authority in South Sudan continues to be exercised at a high social cost. Despite attempts to develop civil institutions, the opposition movements remain profoundly authoritarian and militaristic. Interfactional fighting, insecurity, raiding and the seizure of civilian assets has continued. Based on the logic of co-operative integration, the Ground Rules had envisaged local level Joint Relief Committees being able to play resolution role. Except for relatively minor problems, however, this has proven illusive. The difficulty for enforcement is that UNICEF has no higher sanction on which it can call. While violations of the Ground Rules are monitored, following the approach of ICRC, private discussion has been chosen in preference for public denouncement. At the same time, since the Ground Rules make humanitarian aid a right, apart from moral considerations, this makes its withdrawal a non-starter.

...the option of deliberately withdrawing humanitarian assistance from those in need because of abuse by the local political or military authorities has always been rejected despite pressure from donors and NGOs (Levine, 1997: 22).

Nor has ending support for capacity building been thought appropriate. Since this is provided to the humanitarian wings of the opposition movements, such a sanction is regarded as harming the Ground Rules potential allies. The inability to enforce humanitarian principles, even when warring parries agree to them, illustrates the predicament of the present position. As Levine (1997) argues,
Humanitarian agencies can advocate, disseminate, negotiate and plead with those who carry guns and who wage war against children and civilians. But their influence will always remain limited without the political support of rich and powerful nations. Donor governments, which have enormous power over implementing agencies, must be prepared to take more coherent, normative positions on such issues and set a lean to ensure that 'their' agencies (as they normally describe them), subscribe to and actively promote these principles (Ibid: 25).

This is true, northern governments, even within a globalised system, still play an important enforcement role in relation to the norms and expectations within the international system. Unfortunately, however, these governments appear to have adopted the prescriptions of developmental relief which is in danger of sidelining the whole question of humanitarianism.
same language can translate into the marginalisation of old patronage systems and the recreation of new clientage networks linked to different economies. There is nothing necessarily democratic or for the public good in this process. Indeed, that this transformation is often at a high social cost explains the 'hesitancy' with which evolutionist thinking usually qualifies the transition to liberal-democracy. While policy makers may believe that theory approximates its object, at best one may have a transitory merging of mutual interests.

The articulation of the symbolic language of aid policy with processes of actual transformation in the South has important implications. Contrary to the beliefs of aid policy, humanitarian assistance provided under conditions of neutrality and impartiality may not be the main problem with regard to fuelling wars and creating dependencies. The 'do no harm' strategies of developmental relief, which have uncritically shifted the focus of external aid from people to institutions, warrant closer examination in this respect. Developmental relief, in regarding conflict as abnormal, supports the neo-liberal dichotomy of 'state' versus 'civil society'. It focuses attention on the latter, largely in terms of co-operative integration measures. Projects that spring directly from a view of conflict as stemming from ignorance and communication breakdown. Post-modern transformation, however, allows for no such dichotomy. The whole of the social space is politicised. Moreover, conflict is not an expression of misunderstanding. It is the outcome of conscious and deliberate actions on the part of rulers and their allies.

The uncritical nature and implicit evolutionism of aid policy suggests that, taken as a whole, it is accommodationist with regard to political violence in the South (Duffield, 1994 Oct). Not only is its theory of conflict inadequate, it insists that its usually small-scale and projected integrative measures can put matters right. Accommodationism, however, has a number of manifestations. Shifting the focus of intervention from people to institutions, thereby changing the definition of the crisis, has seen a rising threshold of tolerance. Situations that would have led to calls for a relief intervention a decade ago are now regarded as opportunities for rehabilitation and development. At the same time, however, there is little evidence that the underlying conditions promoting the crisis have appreciably altered. Aid policy would probably argue that its integrative measures are meant to operate over the long-term. That eventually, civil society will function as a restraint. In the meantime, however, policy setbacks and reversals continue to occur.

Another aspect of the northern accommodation with the effects of violence, however, is the increasing unevenness of aid programmes. Reflecting the differentiation of the global economy into conventional core regions as opposed to increasingly parallel and grey peripheral areas, aid interventions are becoming similarly structured. For northern rulers, global instability is increasingly presenting itself as a series of 'wars of choice'. That is, future large-scale
7. CONCLUSION: STRATEGY FOR CHANGE

7.1 DEFINING THE CONTEXT

The analysis of post-modern conflict in this discussion paper has serious implications for aid policy. As a theory it is able to take account of a wide range of empirical evidence that presently remain ignored or unreconciled. In particular, it offers an insight into the possible reasons for policy failure and reversals of northern expectations. It is able to do so because a key assumption that underpins post-modern conflict - and which distinguishes it from aid policy - is that, essentially, it is a normal activity. Or at least, it is an expression of the long-term and embedded social processes that shape everyday life. Post-modern conflict reflects the manner in which political authority is being restructured in the South under the influence of globalisation. It has given rise to innovative forms of political structure associated with the expansion of parallel and grey economic and protection networks. Since these structures are largely extra-legal, they remain beyond the horizon of conventional wisdom. However, as the narcotics industry indicates, not only are these structures viable, in global terms they are playing an increasingly powerful and formative role.

The idea of post-modern conflict, however, can itself be misleading. One should perhaps talk of the post-modern transformation that is affecting the South. Elements of this transformation are shared with the North. For both it denotes an uncharted process occurring outside the framework of the inclusive nation-state that, for several centuries, has shaped the direction of historical change. This transformation is taking place within an increasingly differentiated and fragmented global economy. As a process, the difference between 'war' and 'peace' is one of degree rather than the absolutes that aid policy suggests. Open conflict is simply a quickening or intensification of the embedded structures that define the transformation. In this respect, aid policy's concentration on violent conflict as the main problem, tends to overlook and ignore the need to analyses the overall system.

Post-modern transformation is not an autarkic but a globalised activity. Indeed, the important role of international intermediaries and networks is one of its defining features. Besides commercial and security linkages, foreign aid also interacts with the structures of this change. The symbolic language of aid policy, notably that of privatisation and pluralism, is able to articulate with the surface features of post-modern transformation. Notably, the trend toward multiple and overlapping sovereignties in situations of weak or conditional central competence. The articulation of the symbolic language of aid policy with these tendencies, however, is capable to producing divergent realities. For aid policy it can sustain the impression of an often hesitant movement toward liberal-democracy. For southern rulers, the
interventions will be dependent on areas satisfying a range of national, regional and strategic interests for northern governments. The current disparity between, say, the Balkans and the central Africa is indicative of this process. The rising threshold of tolerance is one aspect that has allowed such a differential system to emerge. Another, is the growing conditionality of humanitarian aid.

Developmental relief suggests that the Cold War distinction between relief and development, and the unconditional nature of the former, has been outmoded. In what is seen as a policy advance, emergency situations have been defined as developmental opportunities. At the same time, however, this has tended to fold humanitarian aid into the framework of conditionality which characterises development assistance. Donor led rule-based systems governing rehabilitation assistance in unstable areas have functioned to make all aid dependent on ruler compliance over security and co-operation issues. While it might be difficult to provide humanitarian assistance in insecure conditions, the blurring of humanitarian aid with rehabilitation has reduced the political profile of decisions to withdraw aid. At the same time, such acts can now be blamed on ruler intransigence.

These developments have great significance in relation to the changing fortunes of humanitarian assistance. The events of the last few years would appear to indicate that period of humanitarian interventionism that began with Band Aid in the mid 1980s has now peaked and may well be on the retreat. Even the role of the media, at one time often credited with forcing governments and aid agencies to respond whether they wanted to or not, seems more equivocal. This is the situation in which the potential for change must be examined.

7.2 GOVERNMENTS AND AID AGENCIES

The analysis of aid policy in this discussion paper is not meant as a contribution to conspiracy theory. The trends and forces described are inherent within the changing structure of the global political economy. While there is a tendency to produce certain outcomes, no specific agencies or agendas are driving the system. Nor, for that matter, are the positions of any of its actors predetermined or incontrovertible. The relations and structures involved are too complex for such mechanistic interpretations. Indeed, understanding and reacting against the tendencies inherent within the system should be an important aim of aid policy. In this respect, even though state has competence eroded and been redefined under the impact of globalisation, the role of governments is still significant. Although usually operating through networks or collective structures as opposed to individual states, they are still prime movers in international relations. They can, for example, shape global norms and practices and, if they desire, add their voice to a call for standards and propriety.

Regarding NGOs, a similar position can be argued. NGOs have a contradictory history. Their origins can be traced to
critical social movements. The sub-contracting of aid and the creation of an aid market, however, has transformed erstwhile social movements into implementing bodies. As such, they can be agents of accommodation and, indeed, many would seem happy with this role. This is not necessarily the case for all NGOs, however. It is possible to avoid accommodationism and being incorporated into the political and survival strategies of southern rulers. Potentially, therefore, NGOs are able to help understand these processes and reclaim their critical heritage. In order to develop such a debate, however, an alternative theory of the transition is needed. A theory which breaks with evolutionism and situates the role of all the actors within the system.

7.3 FORMING ALTERNATIVE POLICY

Theory is only as good as the information that it collects and interprets. At the same time, sound policy rests on a good foundation of understanding. At the moment we know little of the nature of the post-modern transformation since aid theory and the indices it uses are largely geared to a legal, state centred and evolutionist outlook. An alternative aid policy is not possible without creating the basis for a different form of understanding.

Post-modern transformation in the South often occurs at a high social cost. To a large extent, this is being masked by a rising threshold of tolerance within the international system. A more systematic and adequate measure of the social cost of transformation is required. At present, the human development indicators collected by UNDP, for example, are geared toward agency inputs. They do not give a measure of structural vulnerability. Indeed, rather like the massaging of unemployment figures, they are capable of giving seemingly anomalous results. That is, countries were poverty and economic polarisation seem to be worsening while its human development indicators, as measured in such things as vaccination levels, basic education, access to clear water, etc, appear to be improving. A more structural measure of vulnerability is required. At the same time, there is a need to document and understand the rising threshold of tolerance. Such information would be useful in arguing against unevenness and for a more balanced aid responses

- a more structural measure of vulnerability is needed together with documenting the rising threshold of tolerance within the aid system

At the moment, the nature of change in the South remains illusive since conventional indicators tend create an impression of regions which are increasingly economy-less. There is a growing need to better understand the importance and mode of operation of parallel and grey economies. Until these activities can be concretised, ways to approach the systems of political authority and violence which have often emerged in connection with them will remain problematic.
• to investigate the importance and mode of operation of parallel and grey economic activities

At the same time, the nature of the innovative political strategies and structures that southern rulers are evolving are under-researched. When a donor government commissions a consultancy in relation to a rebel or opposition movement, for example, it will probably relate to a developmental topic. For example, to establish the potential for civil society initiatives. Perhaps a more relevant questions would involve investigating the political economy of the movement. That is, what is its funding and procurement base, how dependent is it on outside resources and what external alliances does it have, how is internal command organised, what are the relations between the movement and civilians, and so on. A similar observation, could be made about state structures. Is any development agency trying to understand the commercial and political basis of the National Islamic Front (NIF) government in Sudan? Does such thinking have any relation to what UNDP, for example, believes it is doing in that country?

• establish systematic research on the political economy of post-modern movements and states

In the North, where economies are legally regulated and open government prevails comparable information is relatively easily available. Why is it that aid agencies working in the South feel that they can do without such information and yet think they are still able to develop appropriate policies?

The above measures would improve our understanding of the nature of the transformation in the South. Aid however is a system that links North and South. We also need to increase our knowledge of aid policy in relation to northern governments and the decision making networks they are part of. Rather than early warning geared to generating information, at a time when the world is differentiating into strategic and non-strategic areas, it makes more sense to try to define what Western interests are through what mechanisms they are established.

• investigate what Western aid interests are and through what structures and processes they are defined.

More information in the above areas will not, on its own, solve the problems of aid policy. It would, however, sufficiently broaden our understanding of the post-modern transformation to begin to define alternative policy responses. Policies, moreover, which would be more closely geared to the actual processes of transformation underway rather than an evolutionist model of what societies are expected to become.
REFERENCES


