

that

argue

progress

be made fast enough to quell

Some

goals first but

impatience: best achieved by

starting with strongly opposed views.

still very

for a long

Others say that opposition leaders should

and complex process but this ignores the pressures now on them to

produce results at once or withdraw.

addressing overall

difficult when

allow time

should

these

unavoidable

or early

In view of

is important that an additional way forward should

breakdown, it

and well-

be available. Ideally it

in

preoared

emergency. It

with fundamental

'differences and to define an overall direction at an early stage.

a well-considered

structured

should be

nonâ\200\224start

something

together

process,

pieced

rather

should

risks

than

deal

of

be

to

a

Clearly the Foundation's process  
whether advanced  
body. This should not  
policy or  
set by parties for themselves.

fill this role,  
Foundation or by some other independent  
any other proposal,  
opportunity, but an additional way to pursue the goals  
alternative to

by the

way to

is one

be an

is there should the process fit?

Therefore the process can  
policies  
campaigns.

and

opportunities,

whether

and should

avoid conflict  
or

NSC

the

with other  
opposition

Notably it can be used prior to any negotiation - and without any  
obligation to  
to address differences which are more  
fundamental than can be covered in  
process of dialogue  
define overall goals and common  
or debate.  
ground between the very divergent parties so that  
any subsequent  
negotiations can make real progress.

negotiate -

The primary

a normal

aim: to

If significant  
it faces  
can be

time,  
opinion.

to

used by

achieve

difficulty in

parties decline

to be involved in the NSC, or if  
the independent process  
parties at their own discretion and in their own  
spectrum of

making headway,

consultation

maximum

across

a

To cope  
be informal, sequential and confidential.

with parties

which decline to meet, the next steps will

Johannesburg  
27 June 1986

of

asked

members

Foundationâ\200\231s South

African advisers

During May, a number of the  
EPG (26) not to overlook the above  
(85)

dangers and opportunity. At  
adviser (E7),  
the Foundationâ\200\231s Director then discussed the matter directly with  
a member of the EPG (28) on 14 and 15 May. A  
close understanding  
reached but constraints, notably the deadline  
of the  
imposed  
options  
available.

the suggestion

Commonwealth

issues was

mandate,

limited

of an

the

the

the

by

afterwards,

Soon  
became clear that there were  
immediate agreement between the parties.

increasingly

serious

in

difficult

problems

circumstances, it  
creating any

in

Increasing pressures

'Meanwhile right-wing movements (including the Conservative Party,  
had experienced an  
against Ministers

the HNP, the ANS and the

upsurge  
indicated forceful opposition to the Government's policies.

Afrikaner Volkswag)

Demonstrations

support.

visible

in

In a televised declaration before the  
on 15  
May, the State President emphasised determination to maintain law  
and order. A few days later on 19  
South African Defence  
raids on the ANC in Zambia, Zimbabwe  
Force carried  
and Botswana.

President's Council

out military

May the

In the same televised announcement the  
State President condemned  
foreign interference in the affairs of South Africa. Consultation  
at very senior level (29), both  
by South Africans,  
aimed at the Foundation.  
confirmed that  
The process was now closely identified  
Africans, and  
could be viewed as a home-grown opportunity.

these remarks

directly and

with South

were not

escalations of

Still the  
EPG mission was abandoned,  
against  
bitterness in township violence and threats  
on  
Emergency was declared on 12 June.

By early June the  
for sanctions  
afterwards, amidst increasing  
of widespread unrest  
Soweto uprisings a State of  
pressure continued.

anniversary

prompting

Shortly

Africa.

tenth

calls

South

more

the

the

of

made

generally more

These developments

At the same

difficult,

time, the events of

underlined the urgent

need for a trusted framework and a form of consultation which can  
cope with extremes of opinion and emotion.

participants.

Foundationâ\200\231s

June clearly

hazardous

May and

work

more

for

and

the

â\200\230  
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If  
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Th F  
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Michael Davis

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mm Compuments

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â\200\230.

7'

S guentigl meeting;

â\200\224:\_

a

number â\200\230of

In developing  
with  
politically too. far apart  
made by consulting the  
meetingsâ\200\235.

the Statement of Principles, the Foundation worked  
were  
Progress was  
in "sequential

or too hostile to meet.

organizations

individuals

parties

which

time

one

and

at

a

of

large

number

the  
disputes

South African

The

and multi-  
conflict and  
lateral

element of the

Foundationâ\200\231s approach. In a highly polarised situation where most  
with one constituency or another,  
and the

parties  
co-existence  
were

in  
biâ\200\224lateral

involved  
of  
many

are identified



independence

prompted

interest

'South Africans

vital

make

this

the  
availability of a wide range of parties.

Foundationâ\200\231s

the

the

to

a

Sequential meetings enabled parties to focus informally on issues rather than on the behaviour of opponents; to start a confidence~building phase before having to consider a meeting; and therefore to explore possible lines of progress without risk or commitment.

it

Foundation also  
The approach and widespread  
made  
consult banned and exiled individuals, to  
determine views on a legitimate basis for full involvement in the  
process.  
be used with people in  
prison.

acceptance

possible

approach

could

same

now

The

the

of

to

uglson Handelaĩ-\\201gnd other prisoners

in

an

its

the  
for  
work,  
stage  
early  
renounce  
violence.  
condition  
Foundation

From  
raised a  
tentative proposal concerning Nelson Mandela and other prisoners.  
The well-known  
the prisoners  
had consistently refused to do  
should  
pressing for  
this, seeing violence as a  
of  
imprisonment  
change.  
continuing  
caused  
many  
extra-parliamentary parties to refuse  
involvement in Government-  
consultations. With these parties therefore  
sponsored  
not being consulted, violence appeared  
in the  
minds of  
opposition movements.as a necessary way to pursue their  
objectives.

significant

Meanwhile

confirmed

release

method

talks

their

They

that

was

be

or

to

the

The process of consultation developed by the Foundation offered a  
on this dilemma. The Foundation proposed informally to  
new light  
Government Ministers (29) and  
movements (81) that  
continuing  
as  
demonstrated by development of the Statement of Principles, could  
meet the interests of both sides. The Government was concerned to  
maintain law  
with opponents  
working on  
a non-violent process. Meanwhile opposition movements  
were concerned to secure urgent change within South Africa, which  
was consistent  
opportunity to address

to opposition

consultation,

an additional

non-violent

consistent

with using

process

order,

which

was

and

of

5

fundamental.objectives.

The critical issue was therefore re-framed:  
instead of focussing  
on a renunciation of violence, an option was to consider "release  
of prisoners into a non-violent process"

no

In this case the assurance of non-violence was not to be explicit  
given anyway. Indeed testing and  
- but  
starting a non-violent process  
further than renouncing  
violence:  
productive  
potentially  
a  
political process.

could go  
and  
new

demonstrate

guarantee\_

could

be

to

(BE),  
Despite  
progressing the matter was now complicated by other developments.

reactions

initially

positive

concept

this

to

The Commonwealth EPG

May

1986

In  
Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group (EPG), seeking  
a number of key issues before their mid-June deadline.

ANC were visited by the  
conclusions on

Government

and

the

the

An important feature of the EPG proposal was that Nelson Mandela, other prisoners and the ANC should suspend or renounce violence.

In response the Government should release the prisoners and unbanned the ANC, opening the way for a political dialogue.

about any

A seemingly unavoidable problem was ending violence in the townships. A promised halt or prospect of disturbances, prompting a suspension could reaction by security forces and consequent pressure on leaders to withdraw from any political dialogue. could be provoked if proved to be unacceptable in principle or too slow-moving.

Also withdrawals

followed by

the forum

well be

serious

doubt

a

the

(23)

that

felt

of the

Africa

circumstances, supporters

Foundation's work in

In these

South

proposed adoption of a non-violent and independent process offered a safer initial basis for proceeding. In its nature it demanded fewer immediate and drastic sequential concessions,

as led to the Statement of Principles. It could be meetings such

opposition

more acceptable for both

- by allowing some further definition

inside and

irreversible. steps were

of the

needed.

outside prison

continuation

opportunity

Government

starting

before

major

with

the

the

and

and

of

by

a

in

the

People

encouraged the Foundation to press

with

constrained by a need to avoid conflict with the EPG proposals.

(84)

option and

nOw

decision-making

Principles,

Statement

progress

process

sides

ahead

both

with

this

was

but

the

on

of

## THE FUTURE

what is needed now?

solution through

Differences of opinion between the Government and the  
found no  
must be  
lasting  
necessary. Clearly the  
found by

right have  
normal parliamentary debate and there  
- of long  
the future, by force if  
in  
are not  
the right to achieve the desired progress towards their

a possibility  
resistance

in  
debates

a certainty

parliament

would say

ongoing

- some

other

each

to

. objectives.

black

movements,

opposition

For  
be genuinely  
consulted in devising the future of South Africa, there is a deep  
wish to address fundamental issues and  
direction of  
existing  
Change,  
legislation.â\200\231 Normal  
it were  
available to blacks - would not meet this need either.

complex  
even

parliamentary

the overall

reform

debate

rather

which

of

-

seek

work

than

on

to

if

the Government,

Even for

the form of conventional parliamentary  
debate presents problems. A

reform as  
pursued by

the Government involves a very long series of changes  
in individual laws, representing a stream of provocatibns  
to the  
right

reform as a series of concessions.

Moreover the long time taken by such a programme will continue to  
produce anger

left and overseas, for as

long as it takes to achieve a fully agreed form of Government.

among opponents

continuing

programme

continue

on the

see

who

of

to

Council

additional forum

for consultation,

As a new and

the Government

intends that the processes of Parliament will now be supplemented  
by the National Statutory

not this

achieving consultation across the political spectrum

succeeds in

will depend on many factors: for example, will opposition leaders  
as being under Government



take part  
control?  
as they  
wish? If too much time passes, will they face pressure from their  
constituencies to pull out? One can  
problems, and  
of the Government being blamed for them, because it  
the prospect  
is responsible for the forum.

will they stay involved

foresee these

progress 'is

forum that

is viewed

Whether

(NSC).

in a

not

or

if

is not

time to

to find

It must be clearly said, however, that it  
this document  
complex problems. The inescapable dilemma is that volumes  
will take  
expected to be. Meanwhile patience has already been  
passage  
many  
confrontations between Gavernment and  
provokes'  
Government-arranged talks. Then any  
of consultation, and every decision is condemned.

the purpose of  
fault in any efforts to solve the current  
of law  
change, whatever the â\200\234solutionâ\200\235 is  
exhausted in  
more  
in turn  
from  
be a product

opposition.  
reject

outcome cannot

opposition

create or

withdraw

quarters

produces

leaders

time

This

and

the

of

or

to

## Introduction

### The Foundation

for International Conciliation is an independent, non-government organization, based in Geneva, specialising in the resolution of political conflicts. It does not become involved in conventional mediation, arbitration or judgement, which are often resented and focusses instead on procedures which can in conflict situation, themselves find satisfactory.

involved  
they

rejected, but

find- waysâ\200\230

directly

followed

forward

which

those

by

to

be

a

In November 1985 representatives of the Foundation visited South Africa to investigate whether these procedures should be tried in wanted the

'the current situation,

Africans

whether

South

and

Foundation to assist.

held

were

initially

business and trade unions (8),

### Discussions

primarily involved in politics,

(1)\*, in

(3) and in other organizations (4).

circles

Government Ministers and officials (5), leaders  
opposition  
movements (7).

not  
in the Church  
in academic institutions  
in these  
including  
of parliamentary  
political

extra-parliamehtary

Positive reactions

including leaders

political

prompted

leaders,

parties

contact

people

were

with

with

(5),

who

and

Government

contacts

Some

Foundationâ\200\231s

while

application in the current

(8).

discussed the matter as a potential practical measure.

recommended

others

political conflict

the

direct practical

should be pursued

(9)

Opposition

academic

leaders

Africa

exile

added

South

work,

that

use

and

of

in

in

on

The Foundation's attention

proposal

and

This outlined a

issues facing

directly involved to work for a solution.

then

a draft

strategy for addressing the conflict.

complex political

South Africans, which could be used by the parties

structured

producing

approach

process

focused

the

on

to

Process

Description

This

experienced

observers

conflict. Some of them

approach which

Others offered no

discussions with the Foundation (11).

of

a

South African

of the

were accepted and incorporated in the draft (1%).

continued their

reviewed

in

and  
proposed

participants

comments» or

amendments

amendments

details

by  
the

number

was

and

to

.â\200\224-â\200\224---â\200\224---â\200\224-â\200\224-o.-â\200\231--~--~â\200\231-----  
-â\200\224----â\200\230---â\200\224\_-----â\200\224-â\200\224-----.

\* Bracketed  
of individuals) consulted or  
restricted to protect those concerned.

numbers in the text refer to individuals (or numbers  
names is

Disclosure

reported.

of

South

assist

Foundation completed

an intensive study of issues

Meanwhile the

to  
movements in  
considering their options for the future. Contributions were made  
by 28 leading specialists in political  
14 countries,  
might appear prescriptive) but for  
not  
parties to use at their own discretion in the process.

publication

science in,

political

parties

African

(which

for

and

atalysts to start the process

for the

process, it

starting point

.critical of the Government

As a

was widely considered

(12) that leading Afrikaner churchmen and other churchmen who are  
experience the

process first, and then assist in its development. The concept of  
which to

the Church forming a

build

political

to the

church leader

Foundationâ\200\231s Director by

(13).

in

consultations across the political spectrum (14).

process,

a

â\200\235bridgeâ\200\235 between

communities, on

subsequently

opposition

invited to

should be

developed

advocated

prominent

endorsed

first

new

was

was

and

It

a

U

at the

held

A meeting of churchmen was then

leading members of

Present were

in Johannesburg.

Carlton Hotel

Gereformeerde Kerk

the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk (NGK), the

(GKSA), the Anglican Church and the South African

in Suid-Afrika

Council of Churches (15). All were present as individuals, not as

Foundations was represented by the

Church representatives.

Acland and Jonas

Delegates Andrew

Director, Michael

Store.

The

Davis, and

April

1986

on

5

to

issues

approach

structured

Foundationâ\200\231s

shared interests

used to

The



basis on  
identify a range of  
which churchmen could legitimately advocate a process for change.  
present that  
Against this background it was agreed between those  
as catalysts, to assist in building the  
they would  
a firm  
involvement of political leaders  
individuals present to cooperate  
decision  
churches of  
across a deep and long-standing division between the  
step towards dealing with political  
South  
differences.

the process.

act together

define a

reached

Africa,

and to

first

Thus

was

was

the

by

as

in

a

With this starting point assured, further

made at  
Government, some directly by the Foundation  
to develop a  
circles and a

Africans (17),

contacts were

Government

process

prominent South

the

in

levels

too

(16) and others by  
wider

knowledge

in

the

of

readiness to make use of it.

in extra-

Contacts among parliamentary

parliamentary parties and movements, to the right and left of the  
(18). Discussions

Government, were

generally

confirmed

acceptable and that it provided a suitable basis for introduction  
of the process.

expanded

development

opposition

direction

also

the

parties

renewed

and

of

that

was

and

3

## A Statement of Principles

a

Meanwhile from consulting organizations (19) Principlesâ\200\234 - a statement of fundamental standards and which plans matter of three months, this produced a common statement on:

January 1986, the Foundationâ\200\231s Delegates had been and of a "Statement of values on future of South Africa might be based. In a

potential content

individuals

political

spectrum

for the

on the

wide

of

0  
0  
0  
0  
0

rights and protections;  
nbnâ\200\224discriminatibn;  
citizenship;  
representation;  
property.

Consultation with people of produced a range of exact wording of the found that the final form and content were generally acceptable.

political opinions contributions to the structure, content and those consulted Statement. By

widely differing

April 1986,

is not

intended that

However it agreement. The Statement was developed informally stage. detailed political polarisation now tending towards greater parties could common statement.

this should be portrayed as an  
and needs more  
Moreover, with  
extremes, the  
be obliged to distance themselves from any form of

interpretation

suitable

at

a

On another hand, the  
following respects.

Statement

does

have

significance

in the

It demonstrates  
given the  
interests  
their  
conflict,  
standards.

worst,  
in

right opportunity,  
Even  
and

values.

that widely divergent parties and movements can,  
find common. ground on fundamental  
rhetoric and violence are at  
when  
a total  
may be acceptance of similar basic

indicate

appears

action

overt

and  
reality

there

to

of divergent parties  
Further significance lies in  
to meet and consult with an independent organization to undertake  
of political  
a constructive analysis of

and excessive demands; others can  
interaction  
produce a much more positive result.

the readiness

interests.

rhetoric

provoke

forms

Some

point

Quite

starting

It can also be said that the Statement offered - and still offers  
identify and expand shared

- a

of

interests.

any clear picture of

individual laws,

by deciding

where

consider

acceptable

reached. This ensures

individual steps by which

from the start that the goals are known, understood and wanted.

parties

then

people lacking

start

do

addressing

with some

different

leading,

they are

overall

reform

talks,

goals

to be

only

from

such

work  
they  
the  
the  
and  
for  
to  
is

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A CONSULTATIVE PROCESS IN SOUTH AFRICA

INTERIM REPORT - JUNE 1986