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Racial, ethnic, and religious wars and conflicts have plagued humanity since the primordial past. But since the thawing of the Cold War, there has literally been an explosion of devastating conflicts that seem far more complex than those which erupted in earlier eras. These are also potentially more threatening to international peace because of their breadth, scope, and probable duration:

> *Item 1: the "ethnic cleansing" campaign being carried out by Serbian forces against Muslims and Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina; Item 2: The 3 million Basques in Spain who are intent on establishing an independent state on the border of France and Spain; Item 3: Thousands of Kurdish separatists in Turkey and Iraq who have died in their efforts to create a "Kurdish State"; Item 4: The Clan fighting in Somalia that has left an estimated 300,000 dead and a million homeless and starving; Item Last: In Peru the Maoist guerrilla group known as the "Shining Path," which draws largely from indigenous and mixed-race populations, has waged a 12 year war against the Hispanic elite that rule the country.*

These and the multitude of other ethnic, racial, and religious conflicts around the world are far more brutal and ruinous than anything most indigenous people have experienced since the federal government's aberrant and fortunately short-lived policy of Termination and Relocation, which lasted from 1953 until the 1960's. This last gasp at "assimilating" tribal people into the mythical "melting pot," came on the heels of earlier, far more catastrophic federal policies such as the coerced removal of thousands of tribal people from all directions to the Oklahoma Territory (1830s-1860s); the imprisonment of tribal people on reservations (1850s-late 1800s); and most disastrous of all—the allotment-assimilation-Christianization-Americanization policy of the U.S.—which not only dispossessed indigenous people of most of their ancestral lands, but which also resulted in the cultural genocide of thousands of tribal people (1860s-1920s).

The history of indigenous-Anglo-American political/racial interrelations and the exacerbation of intertribal affairs (precipitated by the forced confinement of different tribal nations onto the same homelands and years of boarding school experience) have received a great deal of quantitative, though certainly not qualitative, scholarly and popular press coverage.

The dimension I want to address briefly, however, is that of *intra-tribal* conflicts, or the divisions that have erupted and continue to fester *within* tribes and what kind of strategies, mechanisms, or techniques are necessary to defuse tensions before they explode. The increasing level of internal fragmentation has already resulted in the deaths of a number of tribal people at the hands of their own kinsmen. Examples of this kind of activity are, unfortunately, abundant though I will cite only a few cases: •Lakota—Wounded Knee II in 1973 which focused, in part, on the conflict between Dick Wilson and his supporters and a large segment of more traditional, treaty-oriented Lakota; •Diné—conflict between Peter McDonald's followers and a much larger group of Diné citizens and political leaders; •Mohawk—recent events at Akwesasne, Mohawk Nation which lead to the death of two Mohawks at the hands of other Mohawks; •Hopi—ongoing internal political/social/cultural conflicts that have had debilitating effects on certain segments of Hopi society and that have practically crippled the political institutions of the Hopi tribe; •Lumbee—tension between the Lumbee tribe and a number of smaller groups dissatisfied with the political leadership of the majority (several of these virtually powerless political groups have gone so far as to establish separate tribal administrations and cultural identities); •Tohono O'odham—internal conflict pitting the San Xavier district of the O'odham Nation against the rest of the nation, largely over water rights. In this case, the San Xavier district is discussing the possibility of "political divorce,' that is, the district is considering "seceding" from the O'odham Nation.

There are, no doubt, countless other examples of cases where fragmented tribes are, in a real sense, devouring themselves from within. Tribal nations, it is safe to say, are no longer the tightly-knit, cohesive, consensus-oriented, homogenous societies they once were. Tribes, of course, were never the idyllic, pristine communities

Hollywood or the mass media presented for America's consumption. Tension and conflict occasionally flared up in all societies. But most tribal citizens would probably agree that until recently there was a basic unanimity on tribal identity and values based upon face-to-face social systems in which kinship and family predominated. There was also, in most tribes, a highly personalized political system that was virtually an extension of the joint family.

For the more fortunate tribes, with some modification, this core identity and value base is still relatively intact. However, for the tribes cited earlier, and many others, the consensus on identity and political, as well as cultural sovereignty historically manifest, has been shattered. Whether it can ever be restored or resurrected is a question I leave for the tribal theorists, philosophers, and the genuine (not neo) traditionalists. And whether this chronic, crippling, and now firmly entrenched tribal factionalism is an outcome of the inexorable tide of modernization, a direct result of federal policies explicitly designed to dissolve tribalism (i.e., allotment, Christian missionaries, boarding schools, denial of religious freedom, etc.) or whether it was generated by the internal social and cultural dynamics inherent in tribes, or some unique combination of all three, is also a question I will not haggle over.

The internal tribal cleavages, divisions, fragmentations and segmentations I observe are realities that cannot be wished away. Thus, each affected tribal community (and the various segments of these communities, if they are clearly discernible), in conjunction with the dedicated leaders of these communities (of both the nation and the various segments), must confront the issues dividing the entire community head on and consider a strategy based on the concept of "power-sharing." This is a democratic decision-making model designed to address the problems of how not only to restore, but also to maintain stability in politically, socially, and culturally fragmented societies.

The decision by the different segments and their leaders to bargain and be accommodative is necessary because, as we have already witnessed, the tribal fragments in some indigenous nations are so entrenched that unless a political bridge can be developed to link the often disparate groups together, the result may well be civil war. Events like those at Wounded Knee, Diné Bikeyah, and Akwesasne, graphically illustrate this.

Ultimately, even extremely diversified tribal communities occupy a more advantageous position relative to other ethnically diverse communities both in the U.S. and abroad because of a vestige sense of mutual dependence that is present, and because the power sharing model fits with the historic traditions of unanimity, tolerance, and respect that have characterized indigenous communities for millennia. Along side this is the belief that the separate tribal segments should retain a great deal of autonomy, i.e., some control, via participation in the tribal nation's larger decision-making process. Finally, the sharing of political power between the different segments is crucial because, in a fundamental sense, they remain each other's most logical allies.