

Washington Law Review

Volume 48
Number 4 *Symposium: Comprehensive Judicial
Reform—A Timely Alternative to Piecemeal
Modification*

8-1-1973

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Recommended Citation

William O. Douglas, Reviews, *Lethal Conflict*, 48 Wash. L. Rev. 941 (1973).
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.law.uw.edu/wlr/vol48/iss4/13>

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REVIEWS

LETHAL CONFLICT

William O. Douglas*

SURVIVING TO 3000, AN INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF LETHAL CONFLICT. By Roy L. Prosterman. Belmont, Calif.: Duxbury Press, 1972. Pp. 424.

Surviving to 3000 is packed with statistics on murder, suicide, and domestic and international group violence—nation by nation, era by era. It sets forth the views of the “experts” on “aggression” in man and in other species. It also reviews studies made on “command” and “obedience” to kill. A great deal of theoretical discussion of leadership, lethal conflict, and death-dealing behavior of man is summarized and reviewed.

Primitive societies and their patterns of conflict are discussed, and the contemporary world as respects war between nations and revolutions within nations is brought into focus by examining contemporary conflicts in this nation. In addition, nuclear weapons, biological weapons, and conventional weapons are discussed. Finally, five “basic approaches to prevention and cure” are set forth.¹ Focusing on most of the technological phases of the problems of survival in this nuclear age, the volume puts together a mass of interesting material particularly suitable for classroom discussions. Whether it was designed with that end in mind, I do not know.

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1. The five basic approaches are as follows:

1. The control example—one country or a group of countries orders or coerces an end to lethal conflict.

2. The agreement example—the conflicting parties themselves agree to end the conflict.

3. The initiative example—one country takes a unilateral step to change its relationship with another country to make conflict less likely.

4. The amelioration example—one country takes a unilateral step to change internally in such a way as to reduce the possibility of conflict.

5. The utopian example—the basic structures of a society are altered to eliminate conflict.

R. PROSTERMAN, *SURVIVING TO 3000, AN INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF LETHAL CONFLICT* 342-403 (1972).

Reviews commonly refer to the "fault" of a book. The "fault" of this book is that the aim and purpose of the author is not very serious or profound at the level of law and political science. One working at problems of control of nuclear weapons or control of any and all kinds of conflicts between nations would start with the thesis of this volume—that man is aggressive and predatory, dangerously so when he pits society against society. That beginning would produce a book of quite different dimensions. The surface of that problem is barely scratched with "A Note on Five Basic Approaches to Prevention and Cure" set forth in this book. While this chapter is about fifty pages long, it is of little use. The fraudulent use of disarmament conferences is not exposed; the growth of law through treaties and, since 1946, through United Nations Conventions is barely mentioned. The book really assumes that the Rule of Force is here to stay. Yet the problem of survival really is how to supplant the Rule of Force with a Rule of Law. That requires a consensus; and a consensus can be obtained only by summit conference after summit conference.

On December 31, 1963, Nikita Khrushchev proposed that all nations submit territorial questions and boundary questions to mediation, conciliation, arbitration, or adjudication.² The author does not mention that proposal, perhaps because it was laughed off the front pages of our newspapers. We had, however, the germ of the only means to live in this nuclear world. Khrushchev was not the first to suggest this. Many working in the field of international law, such as Philip Jessup, Earl Warren, Charles Rhyne, and dozens of others here and abroad have worked hard at this problem. This is the problem that needs discussion, in this book, here and abroad and at all summit conferences. There are many related questions. As I have said, law is expressed in the many United Nations Conventions and in treaties. Why has the Convention to protect whales not been successful? Why has the Atlantic salmon treaty been largely a failure?

We have law at home but predatory man breaks it. Predatory man has done the same at the international level. But long before the year 3000 men must reach agreements on Rules of Law for settling disputes between nations. The present volume gives vivid reasons why this is true. But we know that much without being told.

2. N.Y. Times, Jan. 3, 1964, § 1, at 1, col. 8; *id.*, Jan. 4, 1964, § 1, at 2, col. 1 (text of diplomatic note).