

Preventing Hate Crimes and Ethnic Violence: The Role of Interdependence
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Warfare recently fought between ethnic groups in the Balkans, the Middle East, Asia, as well as other places around the world has led many observers to believe that the only resolution to hate crimes and ethnic conflict is a violent one. Operating under this assumption, researchers and policymakers alike have tended to focus much of their attention on the worst sorts of news about ethnic relations and to overlook positive examples.

In reality, however, at least some historical exemplars of inter-group cooperation have occurred even in circumstances not usually associated with peace and harmony. Indeed, it is possible to locate ethnic conflicts that have not escalated into full-blown violent confrontation, but have been resolved instead through a political process involving accommodation and negotiation (Gurr, 2000; Varshney, 2002).

One such example involves the central European nation of Bulgaria. Most obviously --notwithstanding its proximity to the former Yugoslavia, a potentially explosive ethnic mix, and an impoverished economy-- Bulgaria represents the only country in the Balkans that has escaped serious internal conflict. Moreover, Bulgaria has a track-record of ethnic tolerance that dates back at least to its Nazi alliance during World War II, when the Bulgarian people resisted Hitler=s efforts to send Bulgarian Jews to death camps. Of course, Bulgaria has also had its share of ethnic conflict (e.g., with Turks and Romas) but it has also managed to resolve its hostilities in a peaceful manner.

In this paper we examine several cases of peaceful resolution to ethnic tensions in order to explain how and under which conditions hate crimes can be avoided and peaceful

resolution works. In addition to the Bulgarian experience during World War II, we also examine positive examples of communal relations in contemporary India, Northern Ireland, and the United States.

A Social Psychological Perspective

Group differences have frequently inspired ethnic violence (Lee, Jussim, and McCauley, 1995). Getting individuals to put aside their differences and work together toward the satisfaction of their common objectives has long been regarded by social psychologists as an effective strategy for inoculating a community against inter-group violence (Allport, 1954). Some of the early experiments have shown how the character of group activities can increase or decrease intergroup hostility. In a classic demonstration, Sherif and his collaborators (1961) studied the development and reduction of inter-group hostility in a series of experiments that took place in an isolated summer camp for 11- and 12-year-old boys. After a period of time together, the boys were separated into two distinct groups that engaged in a tournament of zero-sum games. Inter-group hostility increased. Then, Sherif introduced the conditions for making the boys *instrumentally interdependent*. That is, they cooperated toward the satisfaction of a series of *superordinate goals*, a set of objectives greatly valued by the boys in both groups that could not be achieved without everyone working together. The results were dramatic: much of the inter-group hostility in the camp dissipated, while new friendships flourished across group lines.

Sherif's concept of superordinate goals has been applied to improve intergroup relations in ethnically diverse classrooms (Aronson and Gonzalez, 1988; Aronson and Patnoe, 1997; Brewer and Miller, 1996). In an early study, Aronson and his associates (1974) created what they called a *jigsaw teaching technique*, whereby 5th graders

participated in a small experimental classroom. Each child was sorted into a racially integrated learning group and was given a piece of information they had to share with their classmates in order to put the puzzle together. Not unlike Sherif's campers who worked together on shared goals, the key ingredient was that students in the learning group were forced to depend on one another in order to complete their group project and receive a grade. They were instrumentally interdependent in two ways: first, students were purposely structured around the goal of getting a good grade in the class, so that when one student gained, all of them gained. Second, their efforts were shared, so that they worked together in order to achieve their goal. They taught one another; they shared information with one another. Cooperation rather than competition was their only means for achieving a good grade in the course. After using his jigsaw method for a period of six weeks, Aronson measured any changes in the attitudes of students toward one another. As compared with children in traditional competitive classrooms, 5th graders in his jigsaw groups liked their Black and White classmates better, had more positive attitudes toward school, had better self-esteem, and performed just as well on their exams.

Interdependence also has an *affective* variant, whereby individuals from diverse backgrounds become emotionally reliant on one another. In friendship and neighborliness, individuals are mutually dependent with respect to emotional support and encouragement rather than for the satisfaction of their instrumental objectives. The interaction is informal and personalized so that it breaks through the stereotyped thinking and forms the basis for a common bond.

Interdependence in Bulgaria

The Bulgarian experience during World War II provides an important illustration of the power of cooperation on inter-group relations. In 1943, the citizens of this eastern

European country, an ally of the Nazis, saved the lives of almost fifty-thousand Jewish citizens who awaited the trains that would have carried them to the death camp, Treblinka. The Bulgarian King, Boris III, had already sent 11,000 Jews from occupied territories to their death, but his Bulgarian subjects would tolerate no more.

Never seeing them as constituting a personal threat, average Bulgarians simply could not conceive of their Jewish friends and neighbors as evil wrongdoers and did not understand Hitler=s struggle against the Jewish population of Europe. First, just like their neighbors, the Bulgarian Jews were dispersed throughout the social structure. Many had low-paying jobs and lived in poor Bulgarian neighborhoods. Unlike their counterparts in other European countries, very few Bulgarian Jews were moneylenders, bankers, or owners of large businesses. Instead, they held socio-economic positions much like their Christian and Muslim counterparts, playing roles in a wide range of occupations including small grain merchants, retail tradesmen, maids, pushcart vendors, laborers, authors, poets, factory workers, doctors and dentists, composers, pharmacists, artists, engineers, and musicians. Second, though maintaining their religious identity, the Bulgarian Jews were structurally and culturally assimilated, having many intimate friends and acquaintances among their Christian and Muslim neighbors and looking almost exactly like other Bulgarians. Hassidic Jews did not exist; most Jews did not wear yarmulkas or skullcaps, eat Kosher food or attend Saturday services; only Rabbis wore beards. Jews didn=t live in ghettos. All of them--even those who were familiar with the Judeo-Spanish dialect of their ancestors, Ladino--spoke Bulgarian. In sum, for many Bulgarians, the Jews Awere like everybody else.@ Thus, in terms of socio-economic status and cultural values, Bulgarian Jews were hardly regarded as a threat to the population of Christians and Muslims (Todorov, 1999).

Still, because he joined the Nazi movement relatively early, the Bulgarian tsar's alliance with Hitler brought Nazi ideology into Bulgaria and, with it, a number of new laws in the 1930s that restricted the rights of Jewish residents. By 1943, therefore, there were no Jews in the Assembly, press corps, diplomatic corps, officers' corps, state police apparatus, teaching corps, or civil service—in places where Bulgarian Jews might have cooperated with Christians and Muslims on a formal level. But influential groups in society—the physicians and lawyers, the academics and writers, and the Church leaders—confronted the government many times in order to fight with complete commitment against anti-Jewish measures (Bar-Zohar, 1998).

Those Bulgarians who participated in public affairs but lacked decision-making powers nevertheless sought to use their influence. There were letters of protest, telephone calls, and debates in the Assembly. The Union of Lawyers referred to an article in the Bulgarian Constitution, in which all individuals were regarded as equal in law. The leadership of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church pointed to the "words of our Savior in whose eyes all are children of one heavenly Father" (Todorov, 1999; p55). The Bulgarian Writers' Union reminded Bulgarians of their own victimization under the Turks. Assembly members emphasized the suffering of the victims, that they were surely to be transported not to labor camps but to their certain death.

The absence of any Jewish Bulgarians in formal organizations during the critical period when their fate was being negotiated precluded the possibility of Christians and Jews cooperating in an instrumental sense. Thus, it required a grass-roots community movement to convince the leadership of Bulgarian society that its Jews should not be deported. There were protests from influential leaders in the Bulgarian Orthodox Church and from the professional organizations of doctors, lawyers, and authors. A bill was

introduced in Parliament by its vice president to ignore Hitler=s decree. Yet the underlying impetus for tolerance originated in the minds and hearts of ordinary people. Many average Bulgarian Christians chose to wear the yellow Star of David, a symbol that was required by law of its Jewish citizens to wear in order to identify them for deportation. Many average citizens tore down Nazi flags flying from public buildings. Many risked their lives to protect Jewish Bulgarians from anti-Semitic gangs.

According to Jacky and Lisa Comforty in their documentary film entitled *The Optimists*, Bulgarian Christians, Muslims, and Jews had lived side by side for hundreds of years, prior to Nazi Germany making its influence felt across Europe. Through the centuries, religious groups in Bulgaria coexisted in relative peace, friendship, and harmony. As depicted in *The Optimists*, for example, Mordechai Arbel, one of the almost 50,000 Bulgarian Jews who escaped Hitler=s final solution, articulated just how much Jews and Christians crossed ethnic lines in their friendships: “Actually, I didn=t know who was Jewish and who was not Jewish because the non-Jewish friends participated actively in the Jewish holidays and we participated very very actively in the Bulgarian holidays. So we knew that in this and this house, they do it the Bulgarian way, and in this and this house they did it the Jewish way. But the company was mixed, and there were no real differences.” A Jewish Bulgarian woman in the film added, “Most of my girlfriends were Bulgarian Christians and they treated me like a sister. There was no isolation from society. On the contrary, you felt embraced by society.”

Instrumental Interdependence and Race Relations in Jasper, Texas

Communities differ with respect to how their members respond to acts of hate violence. When two groups have a longstanding tradition of separation and hostility, even

a single event can be seen as intolerable and deserving of retaliation by members of the victim=s group. Yet serious inter-group incidents do not always escalate into violence. Under certain conditions, a tragic event may even facilitate reconciliation and cooperation between groups.

In the aftermath of the vicious 1998 hate crime against James Byrd in Jasper, Texas, community responses were actually quite reasonable and patient. The three white supremacists who were eventually convicted of Byrd=s murder--John King, Lawrence Brewer, and Shawn Berry--beat the black hitchhiker until he was unconscious, chained him to their pickup truck and then dragged him down the road for more than two miles to his death. Investigators discovered a Ku Klux Klan manual among the possessions carried by one of the assailants; and the other two wore white supremacist body tatoos depicting the Confederate Knights of America. King, Brewer, and Berry were definitely ardent admirers of the Klan who used white supremacist propaganda and enjoyed being identified with white supremacy symbols of power.

Given the history of racism in the Deep South, it might seem that the brutal murder of a Black resident in a small and impoverished southern town would precipitate a melee or a riot. Yet, rather than divide the community on racial grounds, the murder of James Byrd actually served to bring the Black and White residents of Jasper together. In the aftermath of the slaying, townspeople reported going out of their way to cross racial lines in greeting residents and feeling a new street-level friendliness toward members of the other race. Even the perpetrators= family members recognized the need for civility. Following the trial and conviction of the first defendant, his father phoned the local radio station not to hurl racial accusations, but to urge townspeople to Afill the void made by his mess with love and tolerance.@ (Shlachter, 1999)

Just as in many other southern communities, Blacks and Whites in Jasper had not always been sympathetic toward one another (Temple-Raston, 2002). The legacy of Jim Crow segregation continued to color the informal relations between Blacks and Whites, keeping them apart in their everyday lives. One issue which had long symbolized the community=s struggle with race relations was the town=s cemetery, where a fence down the middle separated Whites buried on one side from Blacks buried on the other. After Byrd=s murder, however, the town came to an agreement to integrate its cemetery. Many residents of Jasper, Black and White, joined together to pull out the posts and tear down the fence (Labalme, 1999: B1.).

The political leaders in Jasper had strong credibility among both its Black and its White residents. Local government had long been racially integrated. Black residents who comprised some 45 percent of the town=s population occupied the position of mayor, two of the five city council positions, and the directorship of the Deep East Texas Council of Governments. In addition, school principals and the administrator of the largest hospital were Black. Even in the almost total absence of inter-racial friendships, Blacks and Whites in Jasper had developed a tradition of cooperating at the formal level.

Jasper=s leadership inspired new areas of reconciliation and non-violence. The community=s White sheriff went out of his way to inspire confidence among Black residents in the aftermath of Byrd=s slaying. Within 24 hours, he had arrested two suspects and then immediately requested the assistance of the FBI. Moreover, Jasper=s local 6,000 watt radio station kept residents informed in an even-handed way about developments related to the murder and the trials, assuring that racially dangerous rumors and anxieties never had an opportunity to spread (Shlachter, 1999). Important point to make is that Jasper, Texas represented a primary source of community identification for

Black and White residents alike. All of them felt a common bond that transcended racial differences. Even extremists on both sides of the racial ledger were genuinely embarrassed by the cruelty and sadism of James Byrd's murder. They seemed to unite across racial lines against the very strong stigma imposed on their community by members of the outside world. Inter-race unity was possible because many of the town's formal organizations had brought together representatives of both groups who were already accustomed to working together (Levin and Rabrenovic, 2001).

Instrumental Interdependence and Ethnic Conflict in Northern Ireland **Erreur ! Signet non défini.**

In divided societies where ethnic violence can and often does rip society apart, it is difficult to sustain friendship ties between the members of different ethnic groups. Even inter-ethnic marriages may not survive in places with extreme hostility. In order to protect themselves from the violence, people often choose to live in segregated communities. The avoidance of the members of other groups decreases the contact between them and consequently the possibility for conflict to develop. Thus, in many places walls make good neighbors. @

Even in the most divided societies, however, it is not always possible to avoid contact. Therefore, the members of different ethnic group may engage in selective relationships. Consequently, even in deeply divided societies like Northern Ireland, there are examples of inter-personal contacts across religious lines. Catholics and Protestant may live in segregated neighborhoods, but they might drink in the same pubs or share the use and management of some of the same local facilities and programs (Darby, 1986). Middle class communities seem to be more likely to have cross-ethnic or religious

organizations whose activities cut across religious barriers than the communities where poor people live. In middle class communities residents are often actively involved in organizations such as golf and tennis clubs, business organizations and cultural clubs that address their common social, economic and cultural needs and concerns.

One such community in Northern Ireland is Dunville (fictional name). Although you cannot call Dunville exactly an integrated community, there is a common infrastructure that allows Catholics and Protestants to coexist, and consequently to protect themselves from communal violence. Dunville=s middle class residents own their homes in integrated neighborhoods. Also, Catholic business families are actively involved in the commercial life of the town and are engaged in mutually beneficial relationships with Protestant businesses. It is not contact per se, but a common interest in maintaining their business success that has led Catholics and Protestants to negotiate potentially divisive issues such as the routes of political demonstrations (Darby, 1986).

The members of both religious groups in Dunville have shared local shops and offices. Both Catholics and Protestants, for the most part, have used local pubs, clubs, and recreational facilities as community amenities. Although the local newspaper supported a Protestant, unionist agenda, it did make an effort to reach a Catholic audience by reporting Gaelic football matches and was consequently read by Catholics as well. The existence of instrumental ties has led to the development of affective relationships among some of the residents who have participated, across religious lines, in each other=s christenings, marriages, and wakes.

Other researchers also confirm that ethnic riots have been rare in prosperous neighborhoods of Northern Ireland (Harris 1972, Jackson 1971). This is attributed in part to the residents= consciousness of the potential loss to their individual property as well as to

the business life of their towns. The business and professional contacts that are established in formal interaction among residents are instrumental in protecting their personal livelihood and are used to maintained ethnic peace in times of crisis.

Interdependent Civic Engagement in Calicut

The conflict between Hindus and Muslims in Kashmir, India has made ethnic violence in this South Asian country highly visible to observers around the world. The Hindu-Muslim cleavage widened dramatically after the separation of Pakistan from India in 1947 and continued to grow through the 1990s. Although highly localized, the ethnic riots that have periodically broken out in Indian communities have involved great losses to both life and property. In addition, rioting has spawned a rise of nationalistic political parties that further radicalized the Hindu and Muslim local populations.

In his research in India, however, Varshney (2002) was able to identify certain Indian localities in which residents successfully resisted the push toward inter-group violence. He attributes the absence of violence between Hindus and Muslims in such communities to the existence of local associations whose members come from different ethnic or religious groups in order to pursue a variety of superordinate goals. As civic organizations, they occupy the space between the government and the private family life in promoting public activities and common interests. Although affective relationships are important for maintaining integrated communities, Varshney argues, it is formal inter-group organizations that are more effective because of their greater resilience to outside threats.

These formal ties are, moreover, substantially absent from those communities in which inter-group violence has occurred on a large scale.

In Calicut, a town in the southern state of Kerala, for example, Hindu, Muslim and

Christian residents live in integrated communities which are connected by their joint participation in formal organizations such as business groups, labor unions, professional associations, as well as social and cultural organizations. Calicut=s Muslim population represents about 37% of the town=s population, and cover the last twenty years--has made steady progress in joining the town=s middle class. In addition, the community also has several important Muslim political, social and cultural institutions and organizations such as the Muslim League, the Muslim Educational Society, the Muslim Service Society and Farook College, the first Muslim college in Kerala. Therefore, the Muslims in Calicut have a strong ethnic identity. But this identity has not led to the development of separatist political activities. On the contrary, the Muslim League is a partner in local government and is able to use its position to provide benefits for its constituency such as state pensions for Muslim clerics and contracts for Muslim businessmen. The Muslim politicians in Calicut benefit from the stability of their community and are thus less likely to use divisive nationalistic strategies and create communal animosity (Varshney, 2002).

Muslims, Hindus and Christians in Calicut have many points of cooperation--both instrumental and affective—in both formal and informal settings. In a survey conducted by Varshney, 83% of respondents reported that they eat with members of other religious groups in social settings, 90% reported that their children play together, and 84% reported that they visit each other regularly (Varshney, 2002). In addition, the residents of Calicut participate across religious groups in activities of many civic organizations and associations such as trade associations, Lions and Rotary Clubs, reading and art clubs.

Calicut=s economy is based on merchandise trade, and most of the traders and workers belong to one of the many trade associations and trade unions in the community. Historically, relationships among merchants were based on trust and did not require formal

contracts. The trade associations have members from all religious groups. For example in 1995, 11 out of 26 trade associations registered with the Federation of Traders= Associations had Hindu, Muslim and Christian officeholders: ΔIf the president of the association was from one community, the general secretary was from the other.@ (Varshney, 2002:127). Similarly, the members of the largest trade unions come from all religious groups. They might join political organizations within their own ethnic group, but when it comes to protecting their labor rights and wages they join the organizations that they think will represent them better.

One of the explanations for the existence of instrumental interdependence in Calicut is that the caste differences among residents were perceived as more important than their religious differences. Because it was historically organized around issues of social justice, the political life of Calicut allowed Hindus and Muslim to forge common bonds around shared social and economic interests. The Muslims were seen as another caste that was put down by Brahmins. Caste divisions, thus overshadowed religious divisions.

When religious tensions in the wider society reached Calicut, the residents were able to resist taking a Δdivide and conquer@ political and economic stance by creating city-level peace committees which focused on what was viewed as good for the community as a whole. The political leaders of both groups, Muslims and Hindus, joined these committees and helped maintain peace. Moreover, the peace committees managed ethnic tensions by becoming a source of accurate information on various rumors circulating in the town that might otherwise have threatened the peace. Such formal organizations ΔΥbecame a forum for everybody to speak and express their anger; they have a sense of participation to all major local actors; and they provided links all the way down to the neighborhood level@ (Varshney, 2002:124).

*The Importance of Class in Managing Ethnic Violence***Erreur ! Signet non défini.**

Even Indian communities that do not have the rich affective connections of the residents of Calicut have maintained ethnic peace in times of crisis. The existence of Hindu-Muslim business connections in Surat, a town in the state of Gujarat, led to the formation of joint business organizations which were instrumental in protecting the old city, where most organizational members lived, from the devastating ethnic riots of 1992-93. These riots took place in Surat shanty towns and were triggered by the destruction of the Baburi mosque in Ayodhya. 197 people were killed, 175 whom were Muslim (Varshney, 2002:239).

However, there were no human losses in Surat=s old city. Similarly to Calicut, the business organizations there sponsored peace committees to respond to the crisis. Some Hindu residents joined the peace committees because they felt moral obligation to protect the life of their Muslim neighbors. Although sympathetic to Hindu nationalism, other Hindus felt that their age-old business connections were more important for their economic well-being than uncertain political benefits from the riots. (Varshney, 2002). Interdependence between Hindu and Muslim businesses thus became a protective force.

On the other hand, the poor residents of Surat lived in highly ethnically segregated slums. Labor contractors, working with specific ethnic groups or through ethnic networks, recruited impoverished residents for their jobs. The result was an ethnically segmented labor market with very few contacts between workers of different ethnic backgrounds. Consequently there were no intercommunal worker=s organizations. When the riots broke, there were no peace committees to intervene, and the loss of human life and property was huge.

This example confirms a more general conclusion, namely that the poor are more likely than their wealthier counterparts in a community to suffer the consequences of ethnic tensions. As in Northern Ireland, the middle class residents in India were more likely to develop intercommunal formal organizations to protect their common interests. That does not mean, however, that the poor cannot develop common interests and establish interdependent relationships.

Research in the United States, for example, shows how social institutions mediate relationships among the poor people in the community. In his analysis of the work of People United for a Better Oakland (PUEBLO), an organization in Oakland, California, Delgado (1993) describes how the residents of poor neighborhoods in that city were able to establish formal alliances around their common needs.

The goal of the organization was to force local human service organizations and the city government to better respond to the needs of Oakland's diverse residents. It addressed issues in education, health care, and environmental protection. It launched campaigns, like the Campaign for Accessible Health Care, to increase the number of multilingual employees in county facilities and make free immunizations available to county residents. The organization also tapped outside resources. The combination of "formal skills training, exposure to other social movement activists, and structured internal discussions developed a leadership core in PUEBLO able to envision and develop a multiracial organization with a broad-based representation." (Delgado, 1993, 121). The organization also developed access to national networks, making it able to obtain results of research on health care and environmental issues and to use these results in the struggle for better services.

Conclusion

What are the conditions under which hate violence can be averted? Based on a social psychological perspective, our analysis of historical examples suggests that inter-group violence is less likely to erupt where interdependence has become institutionalized. Bulgarian Jews and Christians mingled together in both public and private life; and the interdependence that developed between them helped to prevent the emergence of strong anti-Semitism. Political conditions provided additional opportunities for action as well. The Bulgarian parliament had enough autonomy and was able to use it effectively to influence the monarch. Also, the Bulgarian Orthodox Church took an active and public stand against the deportation of Jews.

In the Bulgarian experience, it was the political influence of formal organizations—occupational associations, parliament, the Church hierarchy—that played a critical role in terms of influencing King Boris to withdraw his order sending Jews to death camps. Yet, the Bulgarian example also suggests that instrumental interdependence cannot always be depended on to inoculate a people against victimization. Bulgarian Jews were not permitted by law to cooperate with their non-Jewish counterparts in most formal organizations. Thus, affective interdependence in the form of close friendships and neighborliness at a grassroots level was absolutely essential in saving Bulgarian Jews from certain death. The influence of ordinary Bulgarian citizens on behalf of their Jewish friends and neighbors was so strong and widespread that it eventually forced Bulgarian's formal political institutions to defy Hitler's decree. In the absence of affective interdependence, it seems highly unlikely that Bulgaria's formal organizations, totally lacking in Jewish representation, would have found the collective will to take such a courageous stance against Nazism.

There are also circumstances where affective interdependence simply does not exist. The Black and White residents of Jasper, Texas were almost totally lacking in friendships that crossed racial lines—their social segregation a holdover from the Jim Crow era, especially prevalent in rural areas of the South, when informal contacts between Blacks and Whites were almost totally prohibited both by custom and law. In Jasper after the murder of James Byrd, cooperation that crosscut racial lines was therefore based not on having mutually supportive informal ties, but on working together around shared objectives in local political organizations. In Jasper, it was the existence of instrumental interdependence that helped to maintain peace between Black and White residents.

Moreover, instrumental interdependence seems to have a particularly strong impact on inter-group relations in large and complex societies, where integration depends on the cooperation of individuals who perform specialized tasks. In what Durkheim (1893; 1960) referred to as *an organically integrated society*, members cannot be counted on to hold common values or to be deeply involved with their community. Informal relations therefore lack the influence of their formal counterparts. This seems to have been the situation between Muslims and Hindus in certain areas of India, especially in urban areas, where cooperation in formal organizations appeared to be much more effective than informal ties in terms of limiting inter-group violence.

Socio-economic differences may facilitate or retard opportunities for cooperation to occur between the members of different ethnic groups. In particular, class-based interests seem to protect middle class communities from experiencing the large-scale ethnic violence occurring in many impoverished neighborhoods. Even in Northern Ireland, the economic investment of Protestant and Catholic residents in their communities through homeownership and businesses created strong incentives to work together toward

preventing ethnic violence. By contrast, residents of Northern Ireland's working-class neighborhoods had a much harder time articulating their own class interests, forming inter-communal organizations or developing affective ties. Their class interests were more easily obscured by their ethnic and religious differences.

The existence of a civic infrastructure consisting of independent political parties and civic organizations as well as the separation between government and religious organizations help to create a more democratic social context in which individuals have room for action. In India, Hindu and Muslim residents who joined many of their communities= civic organizations were able to organize against ethnic tensions and provocations and ultimately to prevent violence from occurring. In a similar way, the Bulgarian state was allied with the Nazis, but it was never occupied. As a result, democratic institutions were allowed some degree of freedom to make important decisions, even those that might have been offensive to the German government. This would not have been possible under authoritarian rule.

There is relatively little compelling evidence in the literature to indicate that individuals who interact cooperatively with some members of a group will generalize their positive attitudes to other members of that group or to the group as a whole (Aronson and Gonzalez, 1988; Aronson and Patnoe, 1997; Miller, 2002). Though interesting theoretically, however, the prevention of violent behavior between groups may not depend in the least on the members of society generalizing from intimates or associates. Friendship as a basis for assisting a vulnerable group to avert disaster may aim at protecting only those within an individual's small circle of friends and neighbors, but generate policies that affect every member of the vulnerable group. Similarly, formal interdependence may be motivated by a desire to protect successful relationships across

groups; however, the political actions necessary to defend such relationships also assist those not involved in formal inter-group relations. In Bulgaria, for example, individual Christian citizens probably meant only to rescue their Jewish close friends but hardly all Jews or Jews in general.

Interdependence appears to have a powerful impact on the quality of inter-group relations, but it also has its limitations. Because communities are limited by their local cultural, political and economic context, ethnic peace is almost always fragile. It flourishes in societies that nurture civic culture and democratic political institutions. Indeed, in the presence of autocratic rule, strong formal and informal relationships between groups may be all but irrelevant.

Moreover, in times of economic instability, structural change, or political turmoil, the members of the majority group often react to a real or perceived threat to their position in society by turning against the members of minority groups in their midst. Operating under a zero-sum definition of the situation, members of the dominant group may try to limit the minority's civil rights and access to their country's economic resources. The inability of the formal governing structure to protect the human rights of all residents and to address growing social inequalities can become the root cause of many ethnic conflicts involving hate offenses (Levin and McDevitt, 2002; Levin and Rabrenovic, 2001). Under such conditions, it may be impossible for residents to maintain their expressive and instrumental ties across ethnic lines. In order to maintain ethnic peace, therefore, we must also maintain opportunities for interdependence to develop among diverse members of a community.

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