REVIEW SECTION

Conflict and Cohesion

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

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The paper reviews the theoretical formulations and the empirical tests of the proposition that external conflict increases internal cohesion. Literature from sociology, anthropology, psychology, and political science is discussed. Though it is often assumed to be true and is easily illustrated, the empirical studies suggest that there are a number of intervening variables and that the hypothesis is not uniformly true. While hardly adequate, these empirical studies provide a subtler specification of the hypothesis, knowledge of which can lead researchers to structure their studies differently. Examples of this are provided and other areas of application are also discussed.

> *. . . a differentiation arises between ourselves, the*
> *we-group, or in-group, and everybody else, or the*
> *other-groups, out-groups. . . .*
> *The relation of comradeship and peace in the*
> *we-group and that of hostility and war towards*
> *other-groups are correlative to each other. The*
> *exigencies of war with outsiders are what make*
> *peace inside. [Sumner, 1906: 12]*

The proposition that involvement in external conflict increases internal cohesion, often referred to as the in-group/out-group hypothesis, is an old

and venerable one. Yet, one might just as easily expect involvement in external conflict to aggravate existing internal divisions and invite more expression of discord as noted by Kriesberg (1973: 249). This paper reviews some major formulations of the external conflict/internal cohesion proposition. Some social scientists have attempted to verify this proposition empirically, and a number of these works are also reviewed. The conditions necessary for this hypothesis to hold true (intervening variables) are delineated. The paper concludes by reviewing some recent work that has been done in political science, and by demonstrating the potential utility of this proposition for political analysis.

SOCIOLOGY

The origin and formulation of the hypothesis are attributed to sociologists. Though the above William Graham Sumner remark is often quoted, Georg Simmel (1955) is recognized as having most fully formulated the argument and as having placed it in an overall conception of the role of conflict in social organization. Simmel's argument, however, is neither systematic nor fully consistent. At one point, he argues that conflict leads to cohesion because the exigencies of conflict require political centralization and conformity. At a later point Simmel points out that external conflict can bring together people who would otherwise have nothing to do with one another. Conflict might even cause enemies to join together against an outside foe. Simmel also suggests that conflict has not led to the cohesion of women in the age-old struggle between men and women.

Coser (1956) attempts to systematize Simmel's argument, and to criticize it in the process. He finds fault for example, with Simmel's linking of centralization and cohesion. Coser suggests instead that the cohesion resulting from outside conflict does not necessarily involve centralized control. Coser agrees that centralization often attends warfare, but criticizes Simmel for shifting indiscriminately between violent and nonviolent conflict, and suggests that not all conflict necessarily leads to centralization.

Most importantly, Coser recognizes that conflict can also lead to anomie. Thus, external conflict does not necessarily increase cohesion. There are intervening variables or necessary preconditions involved. First, Coser argues that there must be a degree of group consensus predating the external conflict. He then delineates two intervening variables first discussed by Robin Williams (1947: 58):

(1) the group must exist before the occurrence of external conflict and must see itself as a group; and

(2) an outside threat must be recognized and seen as a menace to the whole group.

In summary, Coser sees conflict as leading to the mobilization of the energies of the members of the group, which brings about increased cohesion and sometimes involves centralization. If the group lacks solidarity to begin with, then it can disintegrate in the face of outside conflict. Nevertheless, the major emphasis is on the cohesive functions of conflict.

As has been noted, the counter proposition is quite plausible, and has also been posited. Sorokin (1942), for example, emphasizes the disintegrative effects of calamities, of which he considers war to be one form. Yet, despite the plausibility of the counter-proposition, and despite Coser's qualifying discussion, it is the external conflict/internal cohesion proposition that is generally offered in the literature, and Coser's book is the universally cited work. In an early propositional inventory, for example, Mack and Snyder (1957: 215) cite Coser as the source for the general proposition that "conflict with outgroups increases internal cohesion." Some just make this point without offering any citation (Boulding, 1962). Dahrendorf argues that the hypothesis is a general law: "it appears to be a general law that human groups react to external pressure by increased internal coherence" (cited in LeVine and Campbell, 1972: 31). It has been called a "ubiquitous principle" and "Coser's strongest theme" (LeVine and Campbell, 1972: 31). None of Coser's qualifications and necessary conditions are mentioned, nor is the counter-hypothesis elucidated. As Mack (1965: 389) points out, "Coser's *The Functions of Social Conflict* runs the risk of being accorded that peculiar form of academic obeissance in which a work is cited by everyone and heeded by no one." Interestingly enough, Mack had done just that in his article with Snyder.

The casual acceptance of the hypothesis without any of the caveats is compounded by the paucity of empirical conflict literature in sociology. In a study of the development of sociological theory, Mullins (1973: 138) argues that conflict theory has not "generated sufficient excitement to attract a coherent group to its particular research concerns." This state of affairs is continually lamented (Bernard, 1965; Mack, 1965; Horowitz, 1971).

One of the few empirical discussions is found in Durkheim's *Suicide* (1951, a translation of the 1930 edition of the 1897 original). Durkheim

observes that national suicide rates decline during certain crises, and offers political wars as an example. He infers that the decrease is due to the increased group integration during crises. While such empirical studies are rare, there are numerous illustrations and anecdotal evidence in the literature. The observation that heresies in medieval Europe developed only in areas free from external physical changes is one example (Russell, 1965).

There are some real problems in the existing conflict literature and in the formulation of the hypothesis. The first problem is the definition of conflict. Numerous typologies, definitions, distinctions, and the like exist in the sociological conflict literature (Fink, 1968). Some distinguish between conflict and competition, others do not. A number argue for a general approach while still others argue for dividing and studying separately different types of conflict. In addition, there is no rigorous definition of conflict (Dadrian, 1971); Loomis points out that some scholars suggest that "almost all social action may be analyzed in terms of conflict" (Loomis, 1967: 875). At least it can be said that the conceptual confusion about conflict has been recognized and articulated (Fink, 1968; Schmidt and Kochan, 1972). The same cannot be said of cohesion; there is nowhere adequate discussion of the term's lack of proper definition. Indeed, ambiguity is such a problem here that some see the effects of wartime governmental repression as cohesion, while others suggest that the repression itself is yet another form of internal conflict.

ANTHROPOLOGY

Anthropologists have studied one form of conflict, warfare, more than have sociologists. Illustrative anthropological studies generally support the external conflict/internal cohension hypothesis. For example, Lewis (1961: 47) argues that feuding and armed conflict in rural Morocco, specifically in Zaer society, was "characterized by a high degree of in-group solidarity." Murphy's (1957: 1031) study of Mundurucu society concludes that "warfare activated and intensified male unity" and therefore "operated to preserve the integration and solidarity of Mundurucu society" (see also Eyde, 1967; Young, 1965).

Indeed, many anthropologists not only find examples that support the hypothesis, but argue that the need to obtain cohesion in a conflict-ridden society leads to external conflict via aggression (Vayda, 1968: 88). Thus, Murphy (1957: 1032) argues that "the ultimate source of their [Mundurucu] bellicosity was the repressed hostility generated

within the society, and the ultimate source of repression was the potential destructiveness of intrasocietal aggression." It should be pointed out that Sumner, Simmel, and Coser see this possibility too.

The most extensive effort to test the hypothesis directly is to be found in the work of the Otterbeins (1965), who take a sample of fifty societies for a cross-cultural study of feuding. They set out to test three hypotheses, one of which is that societies frequently engaging in war have more internal cohesion and therefore less feuding. Their data fail to support this hypothesis, however, and so they raise "the question as to the manner in which war would prevent feuding." That is, they seek the conditions under which the standard hypothesis is valid. They reason (1) that political authorities would intervene and prevent feuding when the group is threatened by war, and (2) that only in societies that have a high level of political integration would officials have the power to intervene. They report their conclusions as follows:

> Not only is there a strong relationship between war and the absence of feuding in high level societies, but in low level societies war and feuding are positively correlated. These results indicate that a society which has a high level of political integration is indeed capable of preventing the internal conflict which would be detrimental to its welfare. Although it would seem judicious for any society engaging in war with its neighbors to have internal cohesion, societies with only a low level of political authority apparently cannot control the feuding which is engendered by the presence of fraternal interest groups; in these societies, war and feuding go hand-in-hand. [Otterbein and Otterbein, 1965: 1478]

In a later study, Otterbein (1968a) focuses on the occurrence of internal war (i.e., warfare between culturally similar political communities). Again, there is no confirmation of the hypothesis that the occurrence of external war (i.e., warfare between culturally different communities) is inversely related to the occurrence of internal war. Once again, the intervening variable of political complexity (i.e., level of political integration) is introduced. Since centralized political systems (i.e., systems with high levels of political integration) have officials who can prevent unauthorized parties from engaging in war, it is presumed that such officials can ally with similar political communities in order to face a culturally different enemy in warfare. But this hypothesis is not confirmed. External war and internal war are not inversely related even for centralized political systems.

Otterbein attempts to explain "why officials in centralized political systems can prevent feuding when engaged in war, but not internal war

when engaged in external war" (Otterbein, 1968b: 105). The answer, he argues, is in the different units of analysis. In his study of feuding, the unit of analysis is the single political community with a single center of power. In the study of internal war, however, the unit of analysis is all the political communities within a particular cultural unit, and there are multiple centers of power. Thus, cultural similarity does not insure unity among separate political communities in waging war against political communities which are culturally different. Otterbein ascribes this to rivalry between officials.

These fascinating studies provide a number of plausible, but not sufficiently confirmed, intervening variables. We have already seen that Williams and Coser suggest that the group must exist as a group prior to the involvement in external conflict and must have some prior solidarity. This is confirmed by Otterbein, since culturally similar political communities which had not previously existed as one community did not ally in the occurrence of external war. Cohesion did not result because no group existed prior to the external conflict. It is clear, therefore, that a second set of intervening variables, concerning the internal organization of the group, also exists. Internal cohesion increases as a result of external conflict only when the group possesses a centralized system where the authorities are capable of intervening to create internal cohesion. Internal cohesion is thus dependent on the existence of strong, centralized, internal leadership.

The anthropological literature, while fascinating and useful, has one major limitation: Conflict and cohesion are invariably defined in terms of physical violence. External conflict is war or warfare, and internal cohesion is the lack of internal violence (i.e., feuding).

PSYCHOLOGY

There is a large social psychology literature on group dynamics, in which group cohesiveness is a central concern, but none of the studies deal with external conflict. Rather, most deal with the independent variable of threat. The literature is still potentially relevant here for two reasons: (1) some of the threat situations discussed, such as war, are equivalent to the conflict situations discussed in the sociological and anthropological studies discussed above; and (2) Coser mentions threat as a necessary condition in order for external conflict to increase internal cohesion. The psychological studies reviewed are divided into situational field studies and experimental ones.

Situational Studies

There are many psychological studies of individual behavior in situations of extreme threat, such as wartime,[1] and most such studies find increased cohesion present in some way. Studies of wartime Britain show widespread goodwill and kindly behavior during the World War II air raids (Janis, 1951; Schmideberg, 1942). Bomber crews become more cohesive when they perceive that their safety depends on one another (Grinker and Spiegel, 1945; see also Shils and Janowitz, 1948). Brophy (1945-1946) finds a negative relationship between racial prejudice among white seamen and the number of years at sea with black seamen. He also discovers that the greatest attitude change occurs among those white seamen who are involved with blacks in operations where there is some danger, and where survival depends partly on the cooperation of group members. Not only during wartime, but in times of general threat as well, ethnocentrism and nationalism increase (LeVine and Campbell, 1972; Rosenblatt, 1964). It is generally felt (Rosenblatt, 1964: 142) that ethnocentrism and nationalism promote group cohesion and integration.

The most extensive literature on extreme situations is the literature on disaster (see, for example, Disaster Research Group, 1961). Most scholars detail the solidarity and altruism evidenced by survivors (Chapman, 1962: 16; Demerath, 1957; Fritz, 1961; Loomis, 1960, 1967). Wallace (1957) likens the solidarity feelings to the euphoria and brotherly love exhibited by followers of social revitalization movements. Turner (1967) argues that such solidarity is an example of Durkheim's concept of mechanical solidarity. A postdisaster questionnaire in South Africa reveals positive relationships among fear, affiliative tendencies (both actual and preferred) and severity of threat (Strumpfer, 1970). Thus, the greater the threat, the greater the affiliative tendencies.

Fritz and Williams (1957: 48) argue that the solidarity is a function of the sharing of common threat and common suffering and that the solidarity sentiment goes so far as "to produce a breakdown of pre-existing social distinctions." Taylor, Zurcher and Key (1970: 158) argue that solidarity is a function of sharing a common task of high priority and they provide citations for their comment that "it is a truism in sociology that group cohesion increases as people work cooperatively and successfully on a shared task." All the situational studies stress the mutuality of the situation and the unanimity of the response.

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1. For a thorough review and bibliography of studies of military units and the effects of combat, see Lang (1972).

There are also studies of individuals facing individual danger. Janis (1958), for example, studies surgical patients and finds that they display an increased need for affiliation. In a more general study (Janis, 1963), he suggests two psychodynamic factors to explain the need to be with others under conditions of danger: (1) transference reactions where extreme situations reactivate childhood separation anxiety and lead to dependency, and (2) needs for reassurance.

While solidarity is commonly witnessed, it is by no means universal. Studies of concentration camps (Bettelheim, 1943; Cohen, 1953) show that prisoners acted as individuals, and Cohen therefore suggests that the prisoners should be considered not as a group but as a "crowd." The same can be said regarding disasters. Lang and Lang (1964: 58), for example, argue that "when disaster threatens over a long period of time, the cohesive forces that hold a group together are subject to strain." The result is demoralization and "various forms of bizarre and schismatic behavior." Indeed, people questioned on their probable responses to disaster generally believe that they might panic. As Pepitone, Diggory, and Wallace (1955) have shown, there are significant differences between predicted responses to high and low levels of threat. Subjects believed that they would experience more hysteria, disorganization and fear in high threat (i.e., death) than in low threat (i.e., temporary incapacity) situations. Moreover, twice as many low threat subjects would help others as would high threat subjects. This last study can be discounted, however, because prediction of responses to a hypothetical situation is not necessarily a good indicator of actual behavior.

While panic is a relatively uncommon phenomenon, Quarantelli (1954) finds that it occurs when people perceive a direct threat to their physical survival, when they fear possible entrapment, when they feel the collectivity is powerless to deal with the situation, and when they feel alone in that they must act and depend on their individual selves to find a way to safety.

Wolfenstein (1957) argues that, depending on the circumstances, disaster can bring out both the best and worst in people. She argues on the one hand that feelings of abandonment lead to a rise in affiliative needs and stimulate generous behavior, and on the other that the worst in people is brought out in situations where there is competition for the means of survival.

Foreman (1963) suggests that in addition to cooperative behavior and panic, there is a third possible reaction to crisis situations: resignation. He argues that resignation occurs when people do not know what to do or when they believe that any action is futile. This is beautifully illustrated

by Hammerschlag and Astrachan's (1971) description of the behavior of individuals snowed in at John F. Kennedy Airport. They show that people were resigned to the situation, never becoming a group because there were no tasks to unify them, there was no visible leader, and there was nothing people could do about the situation.

All the studies of behavior in extreme situations appear to point in the same direction. Most of the time, increased solidarity is evidenced. Disintegrative behavior occurs when people find the collectivity powerless to deal with the situation, and when the situation is such that the problem can best be dealt with on an individual basis. Thus, there are requisites for integrative behavior in extreme situations. In an excellent summary, Fritz (1961) suggests a number of essential features of disasters that lead to increased unity and solidarity. First, the threat and danger come from outside and the causes can clearly be seen and specified. Second, the immediate needs are clearly recognizable, and direct action can be undertaken with discernible results. Third, all are affected indiscriminately and thus the danger and suffering become public phenomena equally shared. The resultant solidarity eliminates even social distinctions.

Experimental Studies

In an early study Wright (1943) shows that frustration increases the degree of cohesiveness of pairs of children and that more time is spent cooperatively and less conflictually. He provides no direct measure of cohesion, however, and no data (see also French, 1944).

One of the first major empirical attempts to investigate the effects of stress on groups is Lanzetta's. Lanzetta, Haefner, Langham and Axelrod (1954) find that subjects under the threat of evaluation are more sociable, cooperative and friendly while working on a task than are groups working under no threat. Lanzetta's later study (1955) uses time limits and negative comments to create the stress. Again, he finds that as stress increases there is a decrease in interpersonal friction and an increase in collaboration and cooperation.

Ostlund (1956) tests the hypothesis that a well-integrated college class exhibits a high degree of group integration when placed under stress. Although the hypothesis was verified by observation, it was not confirmed by students' perceptions. In any case, the results do not bear heavily on our discussion since the hypothesis presupposed a well-integrated group.

Feshback and Singer (1957) test the effects of different threats on the expression of social prejudice. Compared to a control group, those feeling

only personal threats show an increase in social prejudice, while groups sharing a threat show a decrease in prejudice. Burnstein and McRae (1962) find that when a racially mixed group experiences a shared threat, there occurs a reduction in expressed prejudice in the white members' evaluations of the black members of the group.

The psychological study of the hypothesis of increased cohesion under stress has been enriched by a major study by Schachter (1959), who focuses not on cohesiveness but on the basis for affiliation. Different degrees of electrical shock were threatened in order to create states of anxiety, and subjects were then allowed to wait alone or with others prior to actually receiving the shocks. The results show that high-anxiety subjects (i.e., those threatened by a stronger shock) show greater affiliative tendencies. This study focuses strictly on the individual and not on the group, and suggests that highly anxious individuals desire to be with others. Schachter suggests that this may be because affiliation reduces anxiety, or because anxiety produces a need for self-evaluation (i.e., for comparing oneself with others in a similar situation). The self-evaluative role of affiliation is confirmed by Rabbie (1963), and the anxiety reduction function of affiliation is confirmed by Weller (1963).

Myers (1962) used competition to create stress, and used group members' ratings of one another as the dependent variable. Members of competitive teams rated one another higher than members of noncompetitive teams. Even under conditions of little success, competitive team members rated one another higher.

Mulder and Stemerding (1963) did an ingenious field experiment to test the hypothesis that people seek the company of others when they feel threatened. Moreover, they also tested the hypothesis that people manifest a need to lean on strong leadership when they are threatened. Using a Freudian argument, they further develop a problematic hypothesis: to the extent that threat leads to leaning on a strong leader, "it will also result in a tendency in the individual to counteract locomotions of other group members in the direction of the leader" (Mulder and Stemerding, 1963: 319). This is because individuals will be inclined to strive for a leader's exclusive positive feelings. The results support all three hypotheses.

These various studies suggest that in groups under threat, cohesion does indeed increase. The reasons generally given for increased cohesion during threat are (1) cohesion provides anxiety reduction and the comfort of being with others, and (2) cohesion allows self-evaluation through comparison with others. An implicit assumption in these studies is that cohesion is somehow instrumental; it has more than just an emotional

basis. This becomes explicit in discussions of noncooperative (i.e., noncohesive) behavior.

In a major article, Mintz (1951) presents a theory that noncooperative individual behavior in a crisis situation is due not to emotion, but rather to the "reward structure of the situation." If the reward structure benefits cooperation, then cooperative behavior results. When the reward structure encourages disintegrative behavior, then that behavior is exhibited. Mintz created an experiment that provided partial corroboration of the theory.[2]

Hamblin (1958: 68) poses a very sensible question: "why should group integration increase during a crisis?" Based on the studies discussed above, it would seem apparent that cohesion provides psychological comfort, that it is instrumental, and that it is useful. Hamblin suggests, however, that implicit both in the confirming literature and in the instrumental (i.e., nonemotional) explanations is the point that "present in every crisis situation studied is a likely solution to the crisis problem—a solution that requires the cooperation of all or most of the members of the groups involved." Thus, those who argue the instrumentality of group cohesion presume a group solution to the situation. Hamblin therefore set up an experiment in which no likely solution to the crisis problem is available during the crisis. Based on his experiment, and on his reading of previous literature, Hamblin (1958: 75) reaches the following conclusion:

> Group integration decreases during a crisis if a likely solution to the crisis problem is unavailable. Group integration increases during a crisis if a likely cooperative solution to the crisis problem is present. Groups disintegrate during a crisis if a likely, competitive solution to the crisis problem is present.

This conclusion reinforces those in the literature on disaster.

A number of studies can be interpreted as supporting Hamblin's conclusion. Deutsch's (1949) and Grossack's (1954) studies clearly show the importance of the perception of the group as central to goal attainment. The results of Berkowitz, Levy and Harvey (1957) show the importance of viewing relationships with others as instrumental in achieving the group goal. Mann and Mann (1959) find that task-oriented student study groups show an increase in interpersonal attraction, whereas free discussion groups evidence frustration at the indefiniteness of the

2. Kelley, Condry, Dahlke, and Hill (1965) criticize some of Mintz's procedures and conceptualizations. Their experiments utilized a different experimental procedure but their criticisms and experimental results are largely irrelevant to Mintz's argument. Just to give one esoteric example, their experimental procedure involved no interpersonal contact between subjects. This hardly simulates any real-life social situation.

situation. Lanzetta (1955: 47) interprets his results and those of others as suggesting that internal cohesion only results when members of the group "are not associated with the imposed stress and are in fact probably perceived as supports in facing this threat."

One major study supportive of Hamblin's conclusion is by Pepitone and Kleiner (1957). They studied the effects of threat and frustration on cohesiveness, by dividing groups into high and low status teams, threatening half of the high status teams with a possible loss of status, and frustrating half of the low status teams by telling them that it was impossible for them to gain in status. The results show that cohesion (i.e., interpersonal attraction) increases as threat and frustration are reduced. This is not surprising since subjects know what will happen to their groups and that there is nothing group members can do to change the outcome. This study shows clearly that group members must feel that they are able to do something about the external threat, and that the threat must emanate from an external source.

In a set of three field experiments (the last of which is best known as the Robbers Cave Experiment), Muzafer Sherif (1966) set out to test a number of hypotheses and to find a workable means for reducing intergroup conflict. In the process, he reveals many nuances of intergroup relations. All his field experiments verify the hypothesis that "conflict between two groups tends to produce an increase in solidarity within the groups" (Sherif, 1966: 81). In the first experiment, the introduction of a common enemy (another competing group) was successful in reducing conflict between the original two groups. This result was not satisfactory because Sherif was searching for a better way to reduce intergroup conflict than simply by replacing one conflict with another. Sherif felt that groups would cooperate when there were compelling goals for the groups involved, goals which could not be achieved by a single group through its own efforts and resources. These goals he calls "superordinate goals." To test this hypothesis the experimenters created "a series of urgent and natural situations that challenged individuals in both groups" (Sherif, 1966: 89). The hypothesis is indeed verified. One interesting point is that two of the three superordinate goals involve external stress. In one case, the two groups had to get together to fix a breakdown in the water supply system, and in the other, cooperation was required to obtain food. This set of studies substantiate the point that the external threat that increases internal cohesion must involve an achievable superordinate goal.

The preceding discussion points to three intervening variables, which are related to the nature of the external threat, and which are necessary

for that threat to lead to a concomitant increase in internal cohesion. Lott and Lott (1965: 266) put it this way,

> Attraction among individuals will be found to increase when their common threat stems from an external source (i.e., is not a function of their own lack of skill), when there exists the possibility that cooperative behavior may reduce or eliminate the threat, and when single individuals cannot escape from either the group or the threat.

The importance of both the externality of the threat and the instrumentality of the group to deal with it are reinforced in a study by Weller (1963). Weller replicates Schachter's study but with a twist. After subjects are told about the sort of electric shock they are to receive (more shock to create high anxiety), they participate in group discussion in which there is a planted deviant. Weller predicts that groups consisting of high anxiety individuals would be more cohesive. The results do not bear out his expectations. Weller then suggests that the distinction between internal and external threat (i.e., whether the threat arises from within the group or from outside sources) and the distinction between an ongoing group and a newly formed one are keys to explaining his results. Weller especially stresses the second distinction, arguing that in newly formed groups individuals may not know that comfort will be forthcoming, or that the group will be a source of security, or that the group may be able to deal with the threat. In ongoing groups, individuals are much more likely to perceive one another as a source of support and security. This distinction is made by Williams (1947) and by Coser (1956). In two studies by French (1941, 1944), ongoing and organized groups are more cohesive than newly created and unorganized groups when subjected to conditions of threat and frustration.

The above discussion by no means exhausts the psychological literature on cohesion (see Lott and Lott, 1965). There are a number of other foci of study that have not been included because they are peripheral to the discussion. For example, there is a large literature on cohesion and productivity (for one recent study, see Klein, 1971). There are also studies of the effects of work pressure on group productivity. These studies might be used for empirical verification of the hypothesis under discussion if work pressure could be considered to involve external conflict, if work pressure increased group cohesion, and if group productivity increased as a result of increased group cohesion. Unfortunately, the results are contradictory, especially concerning the relationship between cohesion and productivity (Lott and Lott, 1965: 298). A parallel situation exists in

regard to the utility of the frustration/aggression literature. Empirical verification of frustration/aggression could be used to verify the ingroup/ outgroup hypothesis if it could be argued that for groups cohesion is an intervening variable, that is, that frustration increases internal cohesion which increases expressed aggression.[3] While there have been studies which show that more cohesive groups express more hostility (Pepitone and Reichling, 1955; Lott and Lott, 1965), it is a perversion of the frustration/aggression hypothesis to argue that cohesion operates as an intervening variable, especially since the hypothesis was formulated at the individual level of analysis. It may indeed be the case that for groups, the level of internal cohesion operates as an intervening variable but this has not been proven. Finally, there is a large literature on conformity and deviance that may be useful in delineating the dynamics of cohesion maintenance, but has no direct utility in verifying the ingroup/outgroup hypothesis.

So far, the results of various studies have been reported uncritically. The literature does have its problems, however. As we noted previously the major criticisms of the sociological literature were that there is no definition of cohesion and that there is disagreement regarding conflict. In the psychology literature, however, there is disagreement regarding both the independent and dependent variables. In both the situational and the experimental studies, there are a wide variety of independent variables. Almost none of the studies use external conflict as the independent variable. Rather, the variables are competition, threat, stress, fear, frustration, adversity, and so on. Moreover, even where the studies define the independent variable as threat, it is operationalized in a variety of ways ranging from competition to frustration to negative treatment to fear of failure (Lott and Lott, 1965: 265). Such disagreement suggests that there may also be a variety in types of threat. In fact, one study (Sarnoff and Zimbardo, 1961) sets out to test the psychoanalytic distinction between fear and anxiety or shame. The results show, as do Schachter's (1959), that desire to affiliate increases with increasing fear, but that as anxiety increases the desire to affiliate decreases. Pepitone (1961) picks up on the Sarnoff and Zimbardo study and relates it to his previous study with Kleiner to argue that there are three different forms of danger that

3. Janis (1972: 199) suggests a more subtle causal sequence. He argues that "a high degree of group cohesiveness is conducive to a high frequency of symptoms of groupthink, which, in turn, are conducive to a high frequency of defects in decision-making." The cohesion can be a result of an external conflict, such as the invasion of South Korea in 1950, and the defective decision-making can lead to an increased willingness to go to war under certain circumstances.

individuals face: cognitive insecurity, ego danger, and isolation danger. Pepitone, in fact, suggests that previous results may indicate that cognitive insecurity and isolation produce affiliation and attraction, but that ego danger causes avoidance.

Most of the psychological studies dichotomize the independent variable: threat exists or it does not. It may be, as some studies suggest, that the degree of threat is the critical variable. Pepitone goes on to suggest that the different results found by Sarnoff and Zimbardo (1961) between fear and anxiety may not be due to different kinds of danger, but to the degree of danger and to the nature of the group. The difference may not be between fear and anxiety, but between different levels of danger. This corresponds to Dadrian's criticism of Coser. Dadrian (1971) argues that Coser does not see the possibility of a threshold of social conflict as necessary for cohesion to result. Pepitone goes on to suggest that the different outcomes may not be attributable to the kinds of danger, but to the group's differential capabilities of reducing fear as opposed to anxiety. A similar situation exists regarding the dependent variable. While many of the studies use the same dependent variable specified by Coser (i.e., cohesion), many do not. Some, for example, use affiliation. Moreover, there are numerous ways to operationalize cohesion. There are a number of articles that list various definitions, intercorrelate various operational measures, suggest various dimensions of cohesion, and so on (Cartwright, 1968; Eisman, 1959; Enoch and McLemore, 1967; Feldman, 1968; Gross and Martin, 1952; Gruen, 1965; Hagstrom and Selvin, 1965; Schachter, Ellertson, McBride and Gregory, 1951; and Van Bergen and Koekebakker, 1959).

In addition to the conceptual disagreements regarding the variables, there is one major problem with the psychology literature as a whole. It is that the focus is overwhelmingly on the individual unit of analysis. This constrains discussion of the group. Thus, most studies manipulate the independent variable, threat. Most of the intervening variables delineated relate to threat, its characteristics, and how it is perceived by individuals. Discussions about the group reflect this concern: does the individual feel that the group can deal with the threat? does the group provide comfort for the individual? This presents a problem if one attempts to apply this to larger collectivities where other intervening variables will be important. This problem, however, is a manageable one. One can argue that by the logic of triangulation (Campbell, 1969), when combined with studies in the other social sciences, there exists a "stream of evidence" for the hypothesis and for the centrality of certain intervening variables.

The psychology literature thus provides powerful empirical verification of the external conflict/internal cohesion hypothesis, given certain conditions. The psychological literature points to a number of important intervening variables. Some of the studies confirm Otterbein's emphasis on internal group leadership. Some confirm the importance of the group being an ongoing one. All of the studies, in focusing on threat and on the individual, confirm the necessity for the external threat to be seen as menacing to the group as a whole. Indeed, the psychological literature goes much further here. All the studies suggest a number of intervening variables related to external conflict. First, the external conflict must involve a threat; this is the key independent variable throughout. Second, each individual must feel the threat personally. This stems from the obvious psychological emphasis on the individual, and it is likely to be problematic when dealing with large collectivities. Third, the rewards to the individual for staying with the group must be higher than the rewards for abandoning it. Fourth, the individual must see the threat as soluble by group effort and see the group as a source of support and comfort.

There is an additional difficulty, however, in extrapolating from this literature to larger collectivities. The problem does not stem from the focus on the individual unit of analysis, since group properties are mediated by individuals. The problem is that other factors are likely to be important in larger collectivities. For example, a central aspect of small groups is the existence of direct interaction between every individual and the group leader. In larger collectivities this is missing; differences between the two settings may be crucial in determining whether cohesion increases under certain circumstances. Moreover, larger collectivities contain sub-groups and coalitions, which may also confuse any attempt to extrapolate findings from the small group level.

The problem of extrapolation is compounded by the truly major hurdle of the psychology literature and of other social science studies as well—their atemporal nature. These studies illuminate what occurs when an external conflict confronts a group. Many conflicts, however, involve sustained group response. What occurs as a group confronts an external conflict over a period of time? For the effects of certain occurrences the literature surveyed does provide some answers. For example, one can extrapolate from these studies what the effects on internal cohesion would be of changes in perceptions regarding the degree of threat involved in the external conflict, or changes in the perception of the solubility of the conflict, or changes in the perception of the group's ability to deal with the conflict. The effects of other factors on cohesion, however, are

relatively unknown. For example, does the degree of equity or inequity in the distribution of sacrifices in dealing with the conflict affect the degree of internal cohesion? One would suspect that it would, but this has not been studied by psychologists or sociologists. Does success or failure in dealing with the conflict affect internal group cohesion? Again, one would suspect so, and while there is some literature on this (for an example, see Wolman, 1960; Lott and Lott, 1965: 277-279), the results are contradictory and further study is required. Indeed, one could argue contradictory positions based on the studies surveyed in this paper: (a) failure of group solutions leads to individualistic solutions which decreases group cohesion; or (b) failure due to an external source increases both frustration and felt threat and thus further increases internal cohesion. Finally, what are the effects of the length and cumulative costs of external conflict? Do they affect internal cohesion? All of these questions cover the effects on cohesion of the process of dealing with the external conflict. These have not been studied because of the atemporal nature of most of the studies surveyed.

POLITICAL SCIENCE

There are relatively few empirical tests of the external conflict/internal cohesion proposition, and almost no application of it in political science. Given the problems of extrapolation, there is a need to study large collectivities in their own right. The two relevant literatures, alliance cohesion and cross-national linkages, will be examined in terms of their relevance to the proposition under discussion. Moreover, the insights gained from the analysis of the literature in the other social sciences will be used to suggest possible refinements in the research design of these political science works. Then, other potential uses of the proposition in other areas of political science will be suggested.

Alliance Cohesion

A very popular hypothesis in the alliance literature is that external conflict increases internal alliance cohesion (see Holsti, Hopmann, and Sullivan, 1973). While the hypothesis is popular, the supporting evidence is drawn from studies of groups (Holsti, Hopmann, and Sullivan, 1973: 17-18). The best traditional statement and amplification of the hypothesis is to be found in Liska (1962: 100-129). Liska argues that the existence of an external threat is necessary for alliance cohesion, but that for this to be

true, the threat must be manageable for the alliance. Unmanageable threats or threats not directed toward all members do not increase cohesion.

The first empirical test of the hypothesis was performed by Holsti (1965, 1966, 1969), who used content analysis to determine whether Chinese and Soviet perceptions of the United States are most similar during periods of high East-West conflict. The hypothesis is reconfirmed by Hopmann (1967). The problem in these studies is that cohesion is operationalized as attitude or orientation similarity. As pointed out in the discussion of the psychology literature, this has generally been seen as a requisite intervening variable. For each member of a group to see the external threat as menacing is a prerequisite for group cohesion and is not cohesion itself.

This particular shortcoming of the earlier studies is dealt with by Hopmann. Here he extends the analysis to include behavioral measures as well as attitudinal measures of cohesion. His results are mixed; he finds that "the hypothesis tended to hold more strongly for the Communist system when attitudinal data were employed and for NATO when behavioral data were analyzed" (Holsti et al., 1973: 121). Yet, his conclusion is that the hypothesis is generally confirmed. He does not attempt to explain the mixed results. Moreover, given the criticism that the attitudinal data do not measure cohesion, it is too bad that no attempt is made to use attitude congruity as an intervening variable between conflict and behavioral cohesion.

Cross-National Linkages

One author (Kriesberg, 1973) uses the cross-national linkage literature in an empirical discussion of the effects of external conflict on internal cohesion. This covers the huge body of literature (see bibliography in Wilkenfeld, 1973) spawned by Rummel (1963) that attempts to delineate quantitatively the relationship between domestic and foreign conflict behavior.[4] If such a positive relationship were found, it would constitute disconfirming evidence, since the hypothesis under discussion links external conflict with internal cohesion.

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4. Qualitative precursors to this quantitative literature do exist (see citations in Tanter, 1966, and Etzioni, 1968). The only nonqualitative work to precede Rummel was by Sorokin (1937) who found little association between foreign and domestic conflict. For recent critical reviews of this literature see Scolnick (1974) and Mack (1975). Both reviews make devastating criticisms regarding the lack of theory in the linkage literature. Mack's review essay is marred by an unnecessary jingoistic tone and an obscurantist attack on behaviorism.

In various studies, political scientists have worked and reworked the same data—replicating, disaggregating, and lagging in a search for significant relationships. The results are mixed. A number of studies have shown that the dimensions of foreign and domestic conflict are largely independent (Burrowes and Spector, 1973; Rummel, 1963; Tanter, 1966). Some positive relationships are found when nations are divided by types (i.e., modern and nonmodern; personalist, centrist and polyarchic) and when the variables are lagged (McGowan and Shapiro, 1973; Wilkenfeld, 1973). None of the studies, however, suggests that a strong positive relationship exists. Few find negative relationships either. Still, even those studies that use foreign conflict behavior as the independent variable and domestic conflict as the dependent variable (some do reverse the causal direction: Collins, 1973; Haas, 1973; Hazlewood, 1973; Zinnes and Wilkenfeld, 1971), and that obtain positive results, are still problematic. One reason is that some of the foreign conflict factors do not involve the entire nation and are not the kinds of external conflicts that would be expected to relate to internal cohesion: diplomatic conflict (ambassadors recalled and the like) and belligerent conflict. A foreign conflict factor of war is also used, however. Positive relationships between external war and domestic conflict would appear to disconfirm the ingroup/outgroup hypothesis. There is a problem, however, in that the external war factor is one of external war directed by a state at other states and not external war directed at the state by others. Unless one posits that external war behavior is solely responsive to threat behavior by others, a positive relationship between such foreign conflict and domestic conflict only suggests that nations that are externally belligerent in the hope of unifying their people are mistaken in their expectations. It would be interesting, therefore, to see a study of foreign conflict behavior (war) directed *at* a nation and that nation's level of domestic conflict.

The linkage literature is of some interest in terms of the sorts of disaggregations of the data required to obtain some results. First, all the factor analyses of the data reveal a number of different dimensions of foreign and domestic conflict behavior. This suggests that specification of the *nature* of conflict is indeed important. Second, the type of nation also appears to be very important. This suggests the importance both of the nature of leadership within the group and the nature of the existing organizational structure. Third, one study used foreign conflict as an intervening variable and found that levels of domestic conflict are related across time (Wilkenfeld and Zinnes, 1973). This suggests the importance of the ongoing nature of the group and the preexisting level of conflict or

cohesion. It should be noted that these intervening variables have already been delineated.

Stohl (1973, 1974, 1975) attacks the linkage problem via another route. Using a quasi-experimental design he has looked for the effects of American war involvement on domestic levels of political violence. His results are mixed; there is no uniform pattern that holds both for each of the five wars (Spanish-American War through Vietnam War) and for each of the different dimensions of violence. Stohl's positive results, however, may not disconfirm the external conflict/internal cohesion hypothesis. First, some of the wars the United States was involved in did not involve external conflict directed at the United States. Thus, while the Vietnam War is an external conflict in which the United States was involved, it is hard to argue that there was any external conflict *directed* at the United States. Second, Stohl includes governmental coercion in his definition of conflict. Thus, any internal cohesion that obtains as a function of authoritative repression would still involve conflict in Stohl's conception.

Stohl's discussion does, however, sensitize one to the centrality of the means by which internal cohesion is obtained. He points out that when wars occur there is generally more pro-war violence than anti-war violence. This centrality of repression is beautifully illustrated by Roberta Satow's study (1972). She presents a refinement of Simmel and argues that during wartime cohesion is obtained by repression. She verifies this by examining American war involvement in the twentieth century. This confirms the centrality of authoritative group leadership in obtaining cohesion in large collectivities.

Revolutionary Organization

Paul Berman's (1974) study of the National Liberation Front in South Vietnam is the most interesting and theoretically important political science study of cohesion. The study is based on coded interviews of NLF prisoners and defectors. Berman defines his dependent variable of cohesion as the probability of staying in the group (1 for prisoners, 0 for defectors). Four of the independent variables emerge from a factor analysis of the stated reasons for satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the NLF. The two satisfaction factors are labelled "conformity" and "commitment." Commitment involves attachment to the organization and its aims. Conformity involves attachment to the members of the local group without internalization of much of Front doctrine.[5] The two factors of dissatisfaction are

5. The differentiation between cohesion to primary and secondary groups arises in large collectivities where subgroups exist. Situations where the norms of primary and secondary groups diverge do arise (see Janis, 1963; and Lang, 1972).

labelled "demoralization" and "nonintegration." Demoralization involves dissatisfaction with the deprivations of the life of a soldier. Nonintegration points to unassimilated nonacceptors. When cohesion is regressed on these factors of satisfaction and dissatisfaction, the results are as expected: cohesion varies directly with satisfaction and inversely with dissatisfaction. In terms of the preceding analysis, this confirms an expected positive relationship between different definitions of cohesion. As has been pointed out, cohesion has been defined as interpersonal attraction, or as the probability of remaining in the group. Berman's study confirms that the probability of remaining in the group is directly related to interpersonal attraction. The expected importance of the degree of previous solidarity is also confirmed by the finding that nonintegration varies inversely with cohesion.

In addition, Berman's study confirms suspicions voiced above for which there have not been previous empirical confirmation. The finding that demoralization has a negative effect on cohesion, for example, suggests that deprivations, hardships, and sacrifices do adversely affect cohesion. This receives further confirmation from Berman's fifth independent variable: combat experience, which is inversely related to cohesion. He also confirms the suspicion that perception of expected victory or defeat affects cohesion. He finds a statistically significant difference between prisoners and defectors as to their attitudes toward the outcome of the war: defectors tend to believe that the NLF will lose while prisoners tend to believe that the NLF will win. In addition to all this, Berman includes another independent variable: tenure in the NLF. He finds that for noncadres and low-level cadres, tenure is inversely related to cohesion: the longer the tenure in the organization, the greater the probability of defection. On the other hand, for middle level cadres, tenure is directly related to cohesion: the longer the tenure, the smaller the probability of defection. This suggests that even in a revolutionary organization committed to collective goals, individual rewards remain very important in maintaining cohesion. Independent of satisfaction and dissatisfaction, lower level personnel, if not promoted, become more likely to defect from the organization. Thus, just as personal disincentives such as danger and privation are important determinants of cohesion, so, too, on the positive side, are personal (as opposed to collective) incentives.

It should be noted, though, that multiple interpretations are possible simply by inverting the causal sequence. One could argue that various factors that appear to affect cohesion are, in truth, affected by cohesion. Thus, rather than the perception of expected victory or defeat affecting

the likelihood of defection, one could argue that the likelihood of defection, which is determined by other factors, in turn determines the perception of expected victory or defeat. Cognitive dissonance operates both on those who decide to defect and on those who do not: defectors believe the NLF will lose, nondefectors believe the NLF will win. Such alternative interpretations are possible for many of Berman's findings.

Other Uses

Political scientists have long been concerned with societal cleavages and the conflicts that result from them. Studies have focused on horizontal (class) divisions and on vertical (race, ethnic) divisions. Since groups and conflicts are involved, the ingroup/outgroup hypothesis may be of great utility (for potential uses in ethnicity, see Guttentag, 1970; Siegel, 1969).

Another area in which the hypothesis might be useful is the literature on political parties. In a thorough review, Ozbudun (1970) lists the various factors of political party cohesion, although he fails to mention external conflict. One can, however, interpret some of Ozbudun's work to involve the hypothesis. He points out that class polarized party systems are more cohesive. This can be attributed to the greater conflict that exists when natural party competition is reinforced by class conflict. Ozbudun also points out that parties in parliamentary systems are more cohesive; he suggests that this is due to the fact that many roll calls become questions of government confidence. One can reframe this and argue that parties are more cohesive, especially the majority party, because the degree of threat is greater when any vote can topple its leadership.

The ingroup/outgroup hypothesis may be of considerable utility in studying the cohesion of American political parties. Most studies of cohesion have been synchronic, while the hypothesis might have greater utility in diachronic analysis. One could, for example, ask whether political parties become more cohesive as elections approach (elections being the point in time of greatest conflict). Moreover, one could take a step backward and ask whether partisanship decreases when the entire nation is threatened. During the Second World War, for example, British Conservatives and Labourites joined to create a coalition government (in Israel such "wall-to-wall" coalitions are common when war occurs or appears imminent). Indeed, Davis (1974) points out that coalition politics involved such bipartisanship that Labourites were socialized while in office, and that this socialization is one reason why their foreign relations in the early years of the Cold War resembled Tory more than classic Labour policy. One can also restructure Lijphart's (1968) argument along

these lines. Most consociational democracies were created while the nation was experiencing external stress, or shortly thereafter. One can argue, therefore, that consociational democracies arise in fragmented political systems where external stress leads to cohesion at the elite level, and a form of elite repression (in this case, cartelization) is instituted to maintain national cohesion (see also Deutsch et al., 1957; and Etzioni, 1965).

CONCLUSIONS

In sum, then, there is a clear convergence in the literature in both the specific studies and in the various disciplines, that suggests that external conflict does increase internal cohesion under certain conditions. These conditions act as intervening variables and involve, as one could have logically expected, the nature of the external conflict and the nature of the group. The external conflict needs to involve some threat, affect the entire group and all its members equally and indiscriminately, and involve a solution (or at least there must be a useful purpose in group efforts regarding the threat). The group needs to have been an ongoing one with some pre-existing cohesion or consensus, and to have a leadership that can authoritatively enforce cohesion (especially if all the members of the group do not feel the threat). The group must be able to deal with the external conflict, and to provide emotional comfort and support to its members.

The utility of the hypothesis and the already delineated intervening variables is clear. The hypothesis has a much broader applicability in political analysis then its usage would suggest. Study of the workings of the hypothesis in larger collectivities and over time is needed in all the social sciences. Moreover, it has been shown that a detailed knowledge of the specification of the hypothesis in the other social sciences might have led researchers like Hopmann and Wilkenfeld to manipulate and analyze their data differently. Thus, even if the cumulative conceptualization that presently exists is inadequate, an awareness by conflict theorists of the existing multidisciplinary research can play an important role in sensitizing researchers to problems of research strategies and subsequent data analysis.

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