



HARVARD NEGOTIATION PROJECT

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Senator Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
Senator Richard G. Lugar
Senator Barbara Boxer
Senator Diane Feinstein
The Office of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee

Dear Senators:

It has come to my attention that there is an interesting new proposal developed by Mr. John Connolly for the Institute for Public Dialogue entitled "Public Talks," which is being considered by you. My cousin, Dr. Murney Gerlach, D. Phil., Oxford University, author and expert on Presidential history, leadership and foreign policy, has forwarded material to me and recommended a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing. So have other authorities, such as Professor E. Philip Morgan, Monterey Institute of International Relations, and various international organizations. I support these recommendations that the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hold hearings on "Public Talks."

For many years, since I have taught at Harvard Law School, and established the Harvard Negotiation Project, I have dedicated my life to exploring various ways that international conflicts can be resolved peacefully and deliberately through negotiation. These days I am not so active as I once was with "The Advocates," public TV program which ran for many years, in the 1960s and 70s, which opened public forums for discussion of critical foreign issues, or with President Carter and the Camp David Peace Accords, sample African Constitutions, or simply raising the great issues of foreign policy in the class rooms of Harvard Law School. My last book, *Beyond Reason*, dealt with emotions in negotiations, and certainly they run high in the midst of our current Presidential primaries. But my book *Getting to Yes*, after some 20 years, is still important. In helping to resolve foreign relations crises we definitely need to consider the specific culture, history, and content of each situation to move diplomats towards solutions.

The Institute for Public Dialogue is based on something like the "case method" of some of the best law schools – Harvard, University of Chicago, UCLA, and others, because it calls for expert "Public Talks," and "Challenge Documents." These are based on both academic and practical study, research and authority. Yet it is very unique in that it applies to international negotiations. Are they an alternative or another way that the Foreign Relations leaders can work along with the United Nations?

In any case, I think that Mr. Connolly and others have worked hard on this concept and how to help "manage serious and difficult foreign relations problems." I hope that you will give them a hearing with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Warm regards,

Roger Fisher

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Williston Professor of Law, *Emeritus*

RF/cmm