

Conflict Processes Section Holds First Meeting

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The first organizational meeting of the Conflict Processes section of the American Political Science Association met at the 1984 APSA conference in Washington. This meeting took place after the APSA Council approved the formation of the Section. One hundred eighty-nine signatures had been obtained requesting formation of the Conflict Processes Section.

At the meeting, the Section organizer, Manus I. Midlarsky, was nominated President-elect and a Council consisting of Dina Zinnes, Phillip Schrodt, Jacek Kugler, Ted Gurr, Irving Horowitz, and Charles Doran, also were nominated. All were elected to office. One-half of the members are to serve for two years and half for one year, with the respective terms of office to be decided by lot by the President-elect.

The meeting in the Hamilton Suite was extremely well attended with all seats filled and some participants standing in the back of the room. There was a rather interesting mix of older, more established scholars and younger ones rising in the discipline. The discussion was lively with most of it focusing on the purposes of the Section. It was thought that a major purpose should be the focus on similarities in form and explanation of diverse forms of political conflict such as war and revolution. This emphasis would fill the "interstices" between traditional international relations concerns and domestic concerns which normally are represented on the APSA meeting programs. Some thought that in addition to the study of political conflict there should be some focus on conflict management or the applied aspects of conflict behavior. Others suggested an interdisciplinary focus would be appropriate with approaches to the study of political conflict introduced from a variety of related social science disciplines. State violence was suggested as a topic of concern as was conflict involving non-governmental organi-

zations. After some continued discussion, it was decided to mandate the Conflict Processes Council to construct a statement of purpose based on the suggestion that "The Conflict Processes Section of the American Political Science Association is intended as a forum for the study of all forms of political conflict."

All in all it appeared to be a most auspicious beginning. We hope that the current level of interest will be maintained and that contributions to the program at APSA meetings and other activities will continue to capture the attention and participation of the membership. □

APSA Joins Amicus Brief on Confidentiality

The American Political Science Association has joined with the American Sociological Association and the American Anthropological Association in an amicus curiae brief submitted to the U.S. Court of Appeals in support of Mario Brajuha, a graduate student in sociology at the State University of New York.

Mr. Brajuha refused to turn over his dissertation notes to a federal grand jury investigating a suspicious fire in the restaurant where Mr. Brajuha was doing his field-work research. In April, Judge Jack Weinstein of the District Court of New York quashed a subpoena that would have required Mr. Brajuha to release his notes to the grand jury. The government has decided to appeal this decision.

In the decision Judge Weinstein declared that, like journalists, serious scholars are entitled to a "qualified privilege not to reveal documents or confidential sources." However, the right of the researcher to protect the confidentiality of field notes is limited and must be decided on a case-by-case basis that balances "societal interests in fostering scholarly research" with "the public interest in obtaining information about possible criminal activities through the grand jury process." In this case, since Mr. Brajuha testified in person before the grand jury, the subpoena for his notes is "unnecessarily