Dr Thomas Schelling
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6/28/75
TW831.

Dear Dr. Schelling.

I was most pleased to have a chance to see you at the Center a while ago; and to find another intelligent person who agreed on the priority we should be giving to "stateless warfare" as a threat to security, not just a fleabite.

Perhaps you have been following the kidnapping of the Stanford students at Gombe by the anti-Mobutu guerillas from Zaire. The event has tested ~~both~~ the social and ethical convictions of a number of us with respect to matters of dealing with kidnappers, paying ransom and the like. Dave Hamburg is sweating it out in Dar-es-Salaam; but I am in (second-hand) hand contact with him, and I know that he would particularly welcome your own thoughts on ways and means of negotiation in such circumstances. I realize this is necessarily somewhat abstract; though if you are interested Betty Hamburg can fill you in on some more factual details. (by phone from Stanford; or with some delay Dave himself.)

One particular question you may have thought about is that of "good faith" in such dealings. By reviewing my own impressions I guess I am startled by how often such bargains have been fulfilled. I realize that kidnappers have sometimes killed their victims before

or after they have received the ransom; but it surprises me that they ever deliver on such contracts.

In your study of conflict, have you kept any kind of historical notes on such matters? Do you have any general advice to offer? Do you know of any published studies on these matters? (The good faith of bargaining after an assault.)

There are so many issues involved in bargaining over hostages: I hardly know where to begin. It seemed likely that you, more than anyone would have thought systematically about it.

One particular question: in dealing with kidnappers a negotiator is of course exposing himself to capture — and to the raising of the ante! [I am thinking that Dave might place himself in such a situation!!] But I cannot recall when that has ever happened. Can you think of a counterexample? — or if not, why not. (Of course I distinguish the history and politics of inter-state relationships, where the parties anticipate future dealings -- considerations that must have been in his mind in thinking about homicidal "solutions" to problems like Cuba.)

I am posting this from N.Y. en route from Geneva to Stanford. May I ask you to phone me if you have any time-ly responses;

and in any case to return a copy of this manuscript to remind me of my own questions when I am back at my office.

Thanks you
Joshua Lederberg.