



The Opportunity of Change – ADR at the Centre of the World

**ADRIO Conference
June 3rd, 2026**

Gary Furlong
Agree Dispute Resolution



CHANGE

The Berlin Wall

21% Interest Rates

Civil Justice Review

Mandatory Mediation

Y2K

Tech Bubble

2008 Financial Crash

Condo Boom

Trump #1

COVID

Trump #2

Real Estate Crash

Civil Justice Review

Artificial Intelligence

The World Is **Change**

**Change is Everywhere – And it's Important.
Without Change, we don't grow, learn or
improve.**

**Change Causes Conflict –
The better, faster and more effectively people
manage change, the better, faster and more
effective the outcomes.**

Our World

1. COVID – Work habits, Gatherings, Freedom Convoy, The very nature of our relationships with others in this country.
2. Inflation – Led to major labour disruptions:
 - Strikes:
 - 2017 – 2019 Averaged 104 per year
 - 2021- 2025 Averaged 194/year
 - Person-days not worked:
 - 2017 – 2019 Averaged 1,184,854 lost days per year
 - 2025 alone Averaged 4,282,700 lost days in that year
3. Litigation:
 - Over 2+ years to get trial dates – after 1 – 2 years to be ready
 - Major civil justice review because of issues with the system

Our World

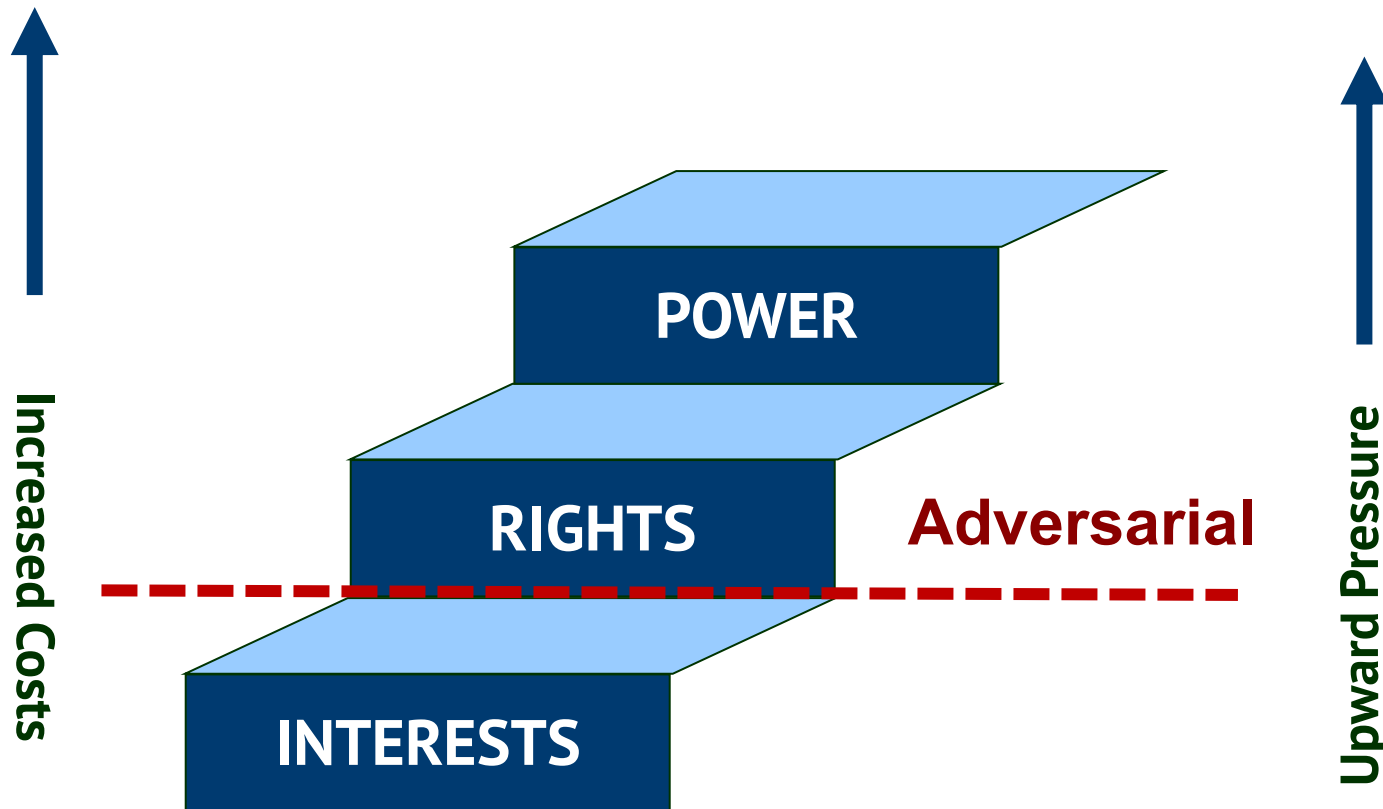
4. Tariffs:

- The economy has slowed to 1.2% growth, may enter recession:
 - Unemployment is up
 - Insolvencies are climbing

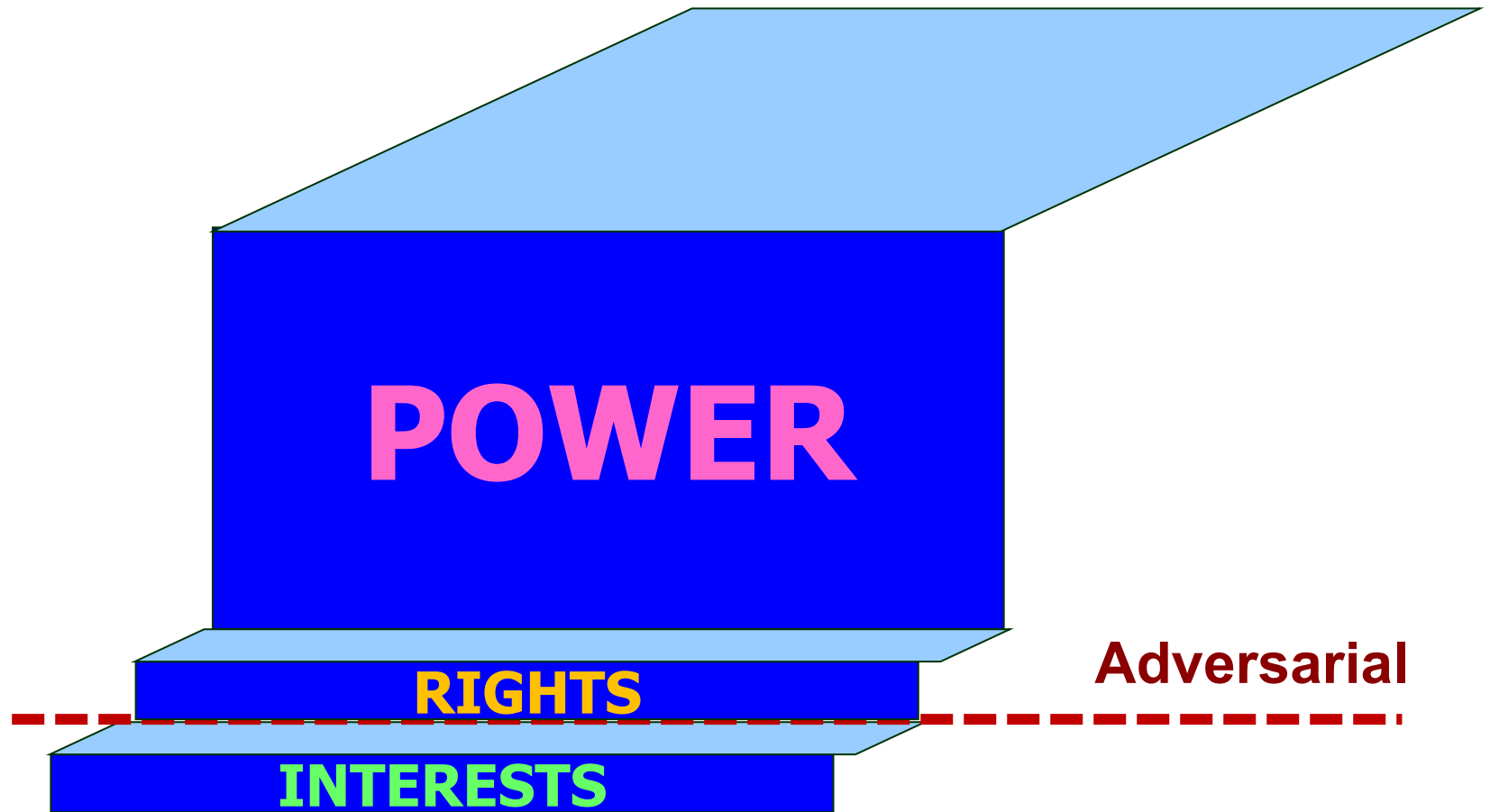
5. Armed Conflict:

- Russia/Ukraine
- South Sudan
- US/Iran
- Israel/Lebanon
- Thailand/Cambodia
- Pakistan/Afghanistan

Problem-Solving **Approaches** - The Stairway

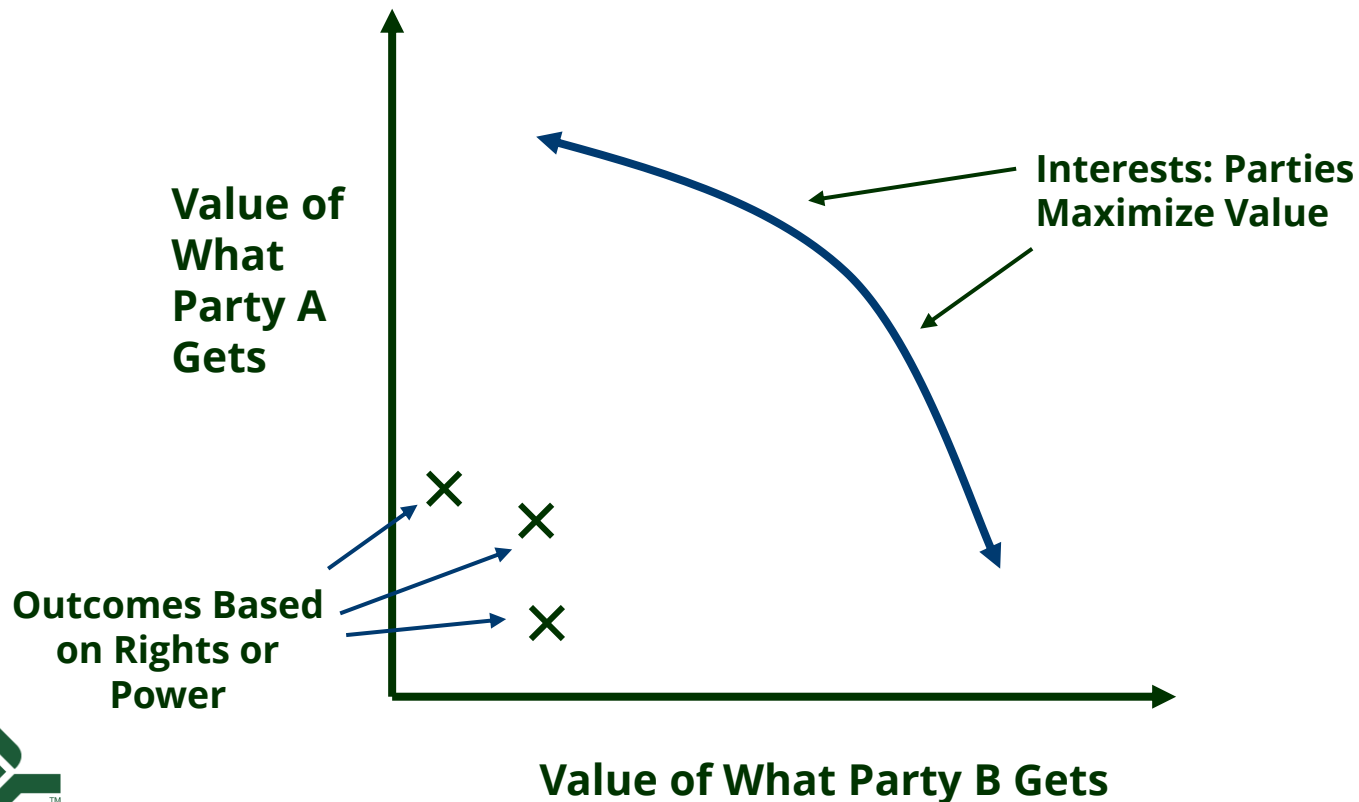


The Stairway - Dysfunctional



Problem-Solving Effectiveness

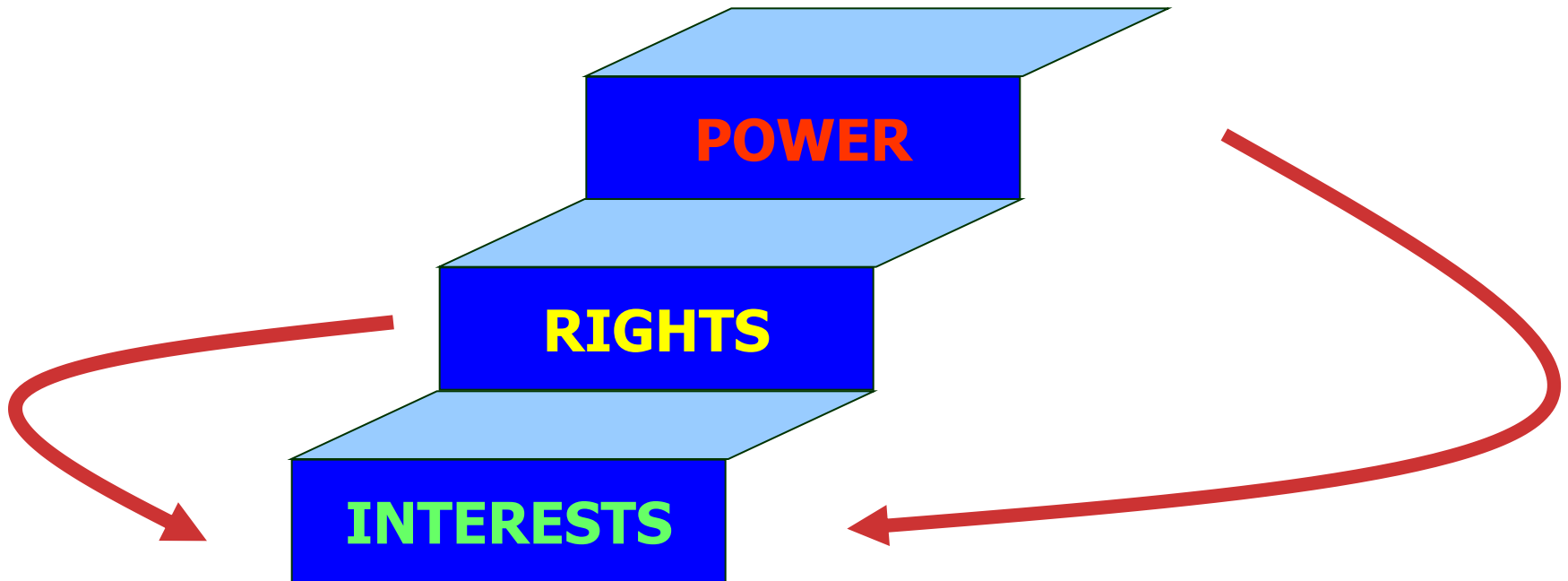
Pareto Efficiency of Agreements



The Opportunity of **Change**

The Heart of **ADR**

As ADR Professionals, we are leaders in the skills, tools and approaches that guide people down the Stairway



Why ADR **Works**

Our World: A Web of Relationships

Every relationship we have is a mix of:

- **COMMON INTERESTS, and**
- **COMPETING INTERESTS**

Name one relationship you have that has zero competing interests?

Why ADR Works

The only question is this: Which of these will parties focus on?

- Rights/Power Processes – Competing Interests, focus on Winning
- Interest-based Processes – Common Interests, focus on Collaborating and Adding Value

Which of these is Better?

Where Does ADR NOT Apply?

Where ADR Applies – Rights/Power

Rights/Power Processes:

- Civil Law – Mandatory/Voluntary Mediation
- Labour Relations – Grievances mediation, Med/Arb, Conciliation, Joint Committees, Relationship by Objectives
- Criminal Law – Restorative Justice, Diversion programs
- Workplace Dysfunction and Discipline – Workplace Assessments and Restoration
- First Nations – Consultation and Reconciliation
- Human Rights Tribunals – Mediation
- International Disputes – Trade Agreements, Maritime Law, Tax Treaties, Currency Zones, Montreal Convention, and more.
- Armed Conflict – Geneva Conventions

Where ADR Applies - **Interests**

Proactive Interest-based Processes – Focus on Interests from the beginning:

- ☐ Training
- ☐ Coaching
- ☐ Systems Design
- ☐ Joint Health and Safety Programs
- ☐ Pay Equity Committees
- ☐ Youth and Peer Mediation Programs
- ☐ Partnership Agreements, Joint Ventures
- ☐ Others?

ADR Challenge

Look around our world and ask:

- **Within every Change, what is the Conflict?**
- **Within every Conflict, where is the Opportunity?**
- **Where, in our world, would Interest-based processes help get better outcomes?**



Change is Everywhere

We are at the Centre of that World

THANK YOU