2. failure to understand what the USSR considers genuine military threats;
3. failure to critically analyze the NATO-WTO military balance and the threats posed to each side;
4. insensitivity to factors – domestic, external, etc. – that shape military policy;
5. failure to explicitly discuss the psychological processes involved in confidence building;
6. failure to appreciate the ramifications of the psychological nature of confidence building;
7. lack of concrete explanations of how or why "intentions" should be made transparent;
8. assumption that more accurate information will lead to relaxed anxieties; and
9. indifference to the bureaucratic realities of state security policies.

From these the author derives two fundamental types of generic error upon which he focusses in considerable detail:

"1. inadequate assessments of Soviet conventional military forces and the nature of the threat that they actually pose; and
2. naive, simplistic or non-existent assumptions about the actual process of "Confidence Building" and its psychological dynamics".

In addition, the author identifies a more important large-scale problem involved in CBM discussions. This is analytic oversimplification or "the incapacity to comprehend the full dimensions of and deal effectively with extremely complex international politico-military phenomena".

With regard to the Soviet threat, the author suggests that CBMs "have differential possibilities for success depending upon the "true" nature of Soviet military doctrine, capabilities and a host of the elements having to do with Soviet foreign and domestic policies". Several alternative "images" of Soviet intentions and capabilities are discussed, only one of which favours CBMs.

Concerning the psychological dimension of confidence building, the author concludes that the mechanisms of misperception and the cognitive processes involved must be understood before CBMs can counter these mechanisms and processes. Confidence building is also compared with decision-making and discrepancies between rational and non-rational elements in confidence building are noted.