

ated the need for the Confidence-Building Measures in the first place and it is that context that will determine whether or not particular CBM proposals are adopted and whether or not they are successful. Because of the cognitive processes which drive the "problem of oversimplification," however, this vital but involved and complex background has not received and is unlikely to receive adequate attention in analytic treatments of and policy proposals for Confidence-Building Measures. As a consequence, the Confidence-Building literature and Confidence-Building thinking are both impoverished.

An associated feature of the "problem of oversimplification" has to do with the actual processes that produce the problem in the first place. The oversimplifying distortions created (in different ways and to different effect) by both policy makers and analysts are a graphic and compelling illustration of how powerful everyday cognitive processes can be. It is this non-conscious power of every human mind to bend, filter, blank, distort, mask, ignore, twist, deceive, and misunderstand information, inferences and choices that is so crucial for understanding not only the analyst's need to develop and use oversimplified analytic models of reality but also the ways in which policy makers deal with complex and uncertain policy problems. It is, incidentally, the failure to consider the operation of these cognitive processes that animates the Type Two Generic Flaw.

The second major consequence of the "problem of oversimplification" flows from the first but is neither as obvious nor as easily explained. Here, the significant consequence is not the presence of two oversimplified and competitive paradigms but, instead, the apparent dominance of one – a variant of the "Dovish" paradigm. The tendency to use either a "Hawkish" or "Dovish" model of how the Soviet-American and WTO-NATO relationship operates is far less pronounced in discussions of Confidence-Building than it is in discussions of nuclear and conventional strategy and other types of arms control where the influence of two, fundamental, largely incompatible and competitive perspectives is fairly clear. The uniform tendency in both the Confidence-Building literature and in Confidence-Building thinking more generally is to use more-or-less "Dovish" assumptions about Soviet conventional force policy, intentions and capabilities. These

assumptions characterize the Soviets as being potentially dangerous but not intent upon attacking the West; fearful of the technological prowess and potential of the West; not overwhelmingly capable militarily; reluctant but determined participants in a mutually dangerous military relationship; and willing (if suspicious) potential arms control partners with a mutual interest in successful negotiations. In addition, there is an associated tendency to rely upon an understanding of Soviet conventional force policy and capabilities that is too simplified and pacific – one that leaves out too many relevant considerations that ultimately are very important to understanding the structure of Soviet forces, the willingness of the Soviet Union to modify that structure in order to implement Confidence-Building Measures, and the actual *feasibility of and need for certain types of surprise attack CBMs, given current Soviet doctrine.*⁷⁰ It is that last consideration, after all, that will ultimately determine the success or failure of Confidence-Building – unless the participants are merely interested in cosmetic rhetoric. There is no obvious reason for the virtual dominance of this particular set of assumptions. It is possible to argue that no other coherent set of assumptions would logically tolerate the prolonged discussion of CBMs – assumptions of Soviet deceit and malevolence, for instance, would certainly not encourage the analysis of Eurocentric Confidence-Building. The predominance of Dovish assumptions may also be a matter of wishful thinking on the part of most analysts working in the area. This point deserves investigation because, ultimately, it may lie at the heart of the present limitations handicapping Confidence-Building thinking.

⁷⁰ It may seem inconsistent or paradoxical to say that Confidence-Building thinking assumes benign Soviet military intentions and then say that a major strand in Confidence-Building thinking has to do with constraining surprise attack options, something which hardly seems the product of benign assumptions. It must be recalled that "surprise attack" CBMs are not intended to prevent surprise attack – although some might impede a surprise attack marginally. The point of such CBMs is to *reduce and control unwarranted concerns about surprise attack in circumstances where no current intention to attack actually exists.* These CBMs are designed primarily to correct *misperceptions.* Virtually no Confidence-Building thinking assumes deliberately concealed malign intent.

