mary concerns of Confidence-Building are clarifying and increasing information about potential enemies, reducing the chances of misperceiving non-hostile acts, and, to some extent, constraining deployments and capabilities that could cause "undue" anxiety about "surprise attack". Most Confidence-Building Measures, therefore, attempt to improve the quality and/or quantity of information available to senior decision makers in order to aid in the correct interpretation of ambiguous acts and uncertain situations. *Reduced to its most fundamental level, then, the logic driving Confidence-Building Measures appears to be an uncomfortable combination of the rational and the non-rational.* There is a clear rational intention – acquire increased amounts of better, more comprehensive, predictable and systematic knowledge in order to correct and control conflict-inducing misperception[101] even though the problem addressed by the rational intention (some might say pretension) – the process and consequences of misperception and a host of related cognitive phenomena – is not at all "rational" in nature or operation. Confidence-Building, therefore, can be considered to be a consciously rational approach to the "correction" of what is actually a collection of non-rational cognitive phenomena.[102]

The ideas of misperception and "cognitive processes" which figure so prominently in this Chapter's discussion of Confidence-Building are exceptionally complicated phenomena. They do not really constitute any clearly defined "collection" of principles nor do they (to the extent that one can correctly call them a "they") neatly fit within a single psychological theory. No real effort has been made up to this point to describe or explain them beyond the very brief working definition noted in the Intro-

duction. It would be a conceit of the worst kind to try to deal comprehensively with them here. That is simply impossible. Nevertheless, we must stop briefly to gain at least a flavour of the cognitive dimension, or the outline of the argument presented here – contrasting the rational and non-rational (cognitive) elements of Confidence-Building – will not be very convincing.

An obvious place to start any examination of misperception and its role in international relations is Robert Jervis' very important and under-appreciated book *Perception and Misperception in International Politics.*[103] It contains a rich assortment of examples illustrating the variety of ways in which senior decision-makers can fail – seriously – to perceive correctly the world about them. It is a collection of "horror stories" that all policy makers would do well to study. By itself, it provides compelling evidence of the scope of misperception. As informative as *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* is, however, it is not much more than a catalogue of different psychological principles and effects. Although it discusses cognitive consistency, evoked sets, belief structures and attitude sets, and various forms of faulty inference mechanisms, it lacks a basic framework or unifying perspective. Steinbruner's *The Cybernetic Theory of Decision*, on the other hand, has a fairly well-developed if still rudimentary basic framework – the cognitive paradigm of decision. It, however, lacks a sufficiently sophisticated and contemporary understanding of cognitive processes. The material informing its basic content is over a decade old. Although he includes fairly lengthy discussions of the very important principle of cognitive consistency, the operation of inferential memory, the "reality principle," and the principles of "economy" (simplicity and stability), and inte-

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[101] Thus objective and the typically instrumental methods of achieving it represented by various CBMs seem completely consistent with a normal understanding of instrumentally rational means and ends. The point here is that theorists and policy makers, if asked about it, would almost certainly describe Confidence-Building as being a rational activity (if implicitly so) in much the same way that they would describe decision-making behaviour as rational. The point of the emergent critique is that Confidence-Building probably is *not* a formally rational activity despite what its practitioners think and that many conceptual and practical problems originate with this fundamental mistake. This whole line of analysis demands considerable further thought.

[102] This seems inescapably true for Western as well as (related) Neutral and Non-Aligned approaches to the problem of Confidence-Building. The Soviet approach, by and large, is not technical, lacks the appearance of such rationalistic concerns and, significantly, has a heavy ideological loading. This "substitution" of one ideology (the contemporary Soviet variant of Marxism-Leninism) for another (the belief in the utility of rational – i.e. scientific – inquiry) in the animating logic of Confidence-Building may go some distance in explaining the true differences between the Eastern and Western approaches to Confidence-Building and CBM negotiations. It also suggests just how difficult it may be for these two fundamentally different perspectives to produce meaningful CBMs.