

- 2. Naive, simplistic or non-existent assumptions about the actual process of "Confidence-Building" and its psychological dynamics.

### The "Type One" Generic CBM Flaw

The first type of fundamental generic flaw involves the *failure to address explicitly, fully, and objectively the complex, idiosyncratic and decidedly offensive character of Soviet military doctrine and capabilities.*<sup>65</sup> Virtually all Western Confidence-Building thinking is animated, in the first place, by concerns about Soviet and WTO conventional military power (as well as by concerns about accidental war growing out of a crisis or misunderstanding). Beyond this very general animating concern, there is seldom any additional reference to the specifics of the "Soviet threat". However, the *perceived fact* of increasingly offensive and potent Soviet conventional military capabilities (relative to NATO forces) is a matter of serious continuing concern to many Western analysts and policy makers. This perception is an inescapable fact of life, *virtually independent of the objective determination that Soviet and WTO forces do or do not constitute a significant conventional military threat.* As a consequence of this "reality", no analytic discussion of Confidence-Building Measures ought simply to begin with the apparent assumption that Soviet military intentions are essentially benign and misunderstood, and then suggest ways in which presumably unwarranted concerns about the character of Soviet policy and capabilities can be addressed through the use of CBMs. *Whether or not Soviet policy and capabilities are essentially benign, non-threatening and misunder-*

*stood is a matter that ought to be established – or at least discussed critically – within the Confidence-Building literature.* Because there are equally plausible "benign" and "malevolent" models of Soviet military capabilities and intentions, the "benign view" should not be the only one to animate discussions of Eurocentric Confidence-Building Measures. While it is true that not every Confidence-Building study need begin with nor include a detailed analysis of Soviet military power, *at some point a careful, deliberately objective examination of Soviet conventional capabilities and doctrine must structure the analysis of Eurocentric CBMs.*

Thus, the Type One Generic Flaw (at least from the Western standpoint) is centrally concerned with the potential disjunctions amongst: broad foreign policy problems (the Soviet conventional military "threat"); narrow policy objectives (negotiating effective and visible CSBMs at Stockholm); and a diverse body of CBM "theory" whose benign "operating assumptions" are generally contrary to the corresponding "facts" of the broad policy perspective where the Soviet "threat" is seen to be real and serious. Reflecting these disjunctions, the Confidence-Building literature (and much Confidence-Building thinking) simply seems to bypass consideration of a crucial and exceedingly relevant question: are Soviet military intentions *fundamentally benign, fundamentally malign, or something more complex, variable and difficult to understand?* The need for and the limits upon Confidence-Building obviously change radically depending upon the answer to this question. The failure to address this question lies at the core of the Type One Generic Flaw.

An underlying analytic failure closely associated with the Type One Generic Flaw is the apparent absence within Confidence-Building thinking of any sophisticated model of WTO-NATO policy interaction. There is rarely any sense of *how* the complex policies of the two alliances interact with each other in causal terms. Sometimes there is a vaguely discernible underlying assumption that some kind of action-reaction interaction, aggravated by "worst-case" planning, drives the two alliances into a progressively more alienated and antagonistic relationship. At other times, there appears to be no interest in nor awareness of the importance of understanding the WTO-

<sup>65</sup> As with other instances in this study, one can replace concern over WTO capabilities with concern over NATO and/or American and/or German military doctrine and capabilities in order to capture the essence of an "Eastern perspective." It is possible of course to argue that there is much in German and American conventional doctrines and postures that "looks" offensive and threatening. However, it is not clear whether Soviet and East European analysts working in the Confidence-Building area (1) exaggerate, as do their Eastern colleagues, the offensive threat posed by NATO or (2) (like their Western counterparts) somehow overlook specific military threats and assume basically benign intentions while acknowledging a general danger of miscalculation. Whatever else, there does seem to be less inclination to blithely assume benign Western intentions and a fairly typical tendency to prefer unilateral security solutions.

