

5. FINAL CONCLUSION

History presents us with the unexpected. Out of the authoritarian East came one of the greatest peacemakers of modern times. Out of the free and democratic West came a multitude of militarists who threw away the best opportunity for disarmament and peace that the modern world has ever known. Convinced of the correctness of their policies, despite all the evidence to the contrary, they are now taking us unwittingly on the road to war when we could and should be on the road to peace.

As we have seen the three assumptions on which the Western approach to the reform process in the former Soviet Union was based were false. First, the unilateralist initiatives of the Gorbachev administration not 'bargaining from strength' ended the Cold War. Secondly, the West should either have provided a major programme of economic aid for the former Soviet Union or made clear to the radicals from the beginning that their plans for a market economy, which had always been predicated on such support, were unrealistic. The failure to provide sufficient support first for Gorbachev, and then Yeltsin, has left the West without moral foundation. And now global security is threatened by its adherence to the doctrine of collective security and rejection of common security.

We are forced to the conclusion that unless the West alters course, and does so soon, the seeds of war sown in the 1980s and early 1990s will bear a bitter harvest as NATO, and other Western political and military institutions, embark on a strategy of enforcing the 'peace' by the application of overwhelming military force. This strategy, in its futility and waste, may yet exceed that of the Cold War from which it emerged. There is an alternative but it will not come of itself. So it is to alert Western, and especially British, publics to the dangers and the opportunities of our present situation that we dedicate our series of briefings.

From:

Peter Southwood (ed.), The Triumph of Unilateralism: The Failure of Western Militarism,
 Briefing No. 1 (Project on Demilitarisation, March 1993), ISBN 1-898079-00-5