

Conclusion: Prophets and Practitioners

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For 45 years, the attitudes and policies of the northern industrialized states were dominated by the ideological divide and military confrontation of the Cold War. Now that era is past and we have a rare opportunity to work towards the creation of a more just and peaceful world. Instead, all the signs are that we are heading for a bitterly divided, unstable and dangerous world. We are often, as Maria Elena suggested in her introduction, our own worst enemy – unable to recognize the opportunities open to us as we retreat into the false security presented by military power.

The prospect of a divided world is all too real. As we have seen, a combination of circumstances and trends is likely to lead to heightened instability and conflict. On present trends the current deep polarization of the world community into wealth and poverty, power and dispossession, is set to grow still deeper. Within 30 years, barely one-seventh of the world's population will control and use three-quarters of the wealth and resources. Yet this will be a world in the midst of quite fundamental environmental constraints as the global ecosystem fails to cope with expanding human activity.

In essence, any improvement in the well-being of the majority of humankind will have to be achieved through routes quite different from those which have failed us so far. Moreover, the greatest pressure for changes in our economic system will be on the ecologically profligate

populations of the North. Yet all the signs are that the northern states will not allow their materially high standards of living to be threatened by the needs of the majority – they will simply try to maintain their position through force. This is essentially self-defeating, for we now live in a world which experiences one core legacy of the 45-year Cold War – gross militarization. This is a global phenomenon, and its very profitability has ensured that military power has proliferated across the world. Any attempt to impose a northern security hegemony on the world community may appear to work initially but will inevitably lead to a growing reaction from southern states and the growing global underclass.

In 30 years time, a world of more than eight billion people, in which the power resides principally with a billion or so people in the North – from North America through Europe to East Asia – will be a world with billions of educated but workless and impoverished people who *know* how the rich and powerful conduct themselves, and who see their own futures being mortgaged by the economic profligacy of the minority. As environmental constraints limit any escape through traditional notions of economic development, frustration will turn to desperation and desperation to violence. This differs only in degree from our present circumstances, where social unrest and the crime which so often follows is countered by stronger policing and mass imprisonment, denial of human rights and, all too often, repression of the dispossessed.

In the final analysis, though, militarization is self-defeating, since an inevitable consequence is ultimately to supply southern states and some in the global underclass with many and diverse instruments of potential redress. These are not just the Armalite rifle or Semtex of the late twentieth century, but the nerve gases, biological warfare agents and suitcase nuclear bombs of the early twenty-first century.

BEYOND FAILED IDEOLOGIES TO NEW VISIONS

The present world order is not working. It is failing to meet the challenges of the rich-poor divide, of environmental constraints and of militarism, which cannot solve the conflicts inherent in the other two. What makes the discussion of real security so important is its call to a new vision of how things could be. To values of sharing rather than selfishness, of equality rather than exploitation, of negotiation not warfare, of shared international rules of coexistence between nations

and peoples, not control by the strongest. It raises fundamental questions about *whose* security – of the strongest or the weak or everyone?

The post-Cold War world, with all its uncertainties and problems, also provides a major opportunity to inject analysis and vision into public debate – for a public that is worried and dismayed that the promise left by the fall of the Berlin Wall and collapse of communism has not been fulfilled. A major reason why the hoped-for change has not occurred is because the real problems in the world were not, and are not, the East–West division but rich world/poor world divisions over the distribution and use of power and resources. Dealing with this will require more than a rampant free market ideology, pitting one against the other, which is all that seems to be on offer from politicians, with its view that people are rather nasty, operate only from self-interest and that this self-interest is the only motivation for progress.

Idealism is realism for our human future. To think that the North can close the gates around it and keep what it has is wishful thinking. Change linked to a new vision of security is needed in North–South relations if we are to live together on a peaceful planet.

There is massive scope for demilitarization and a renewal of all kinds of research into other forms of economy and technology if the brain power locked into the military can be liberated for the human good. Actual world military spending could be cut by four-fifths and still be at around 1 per cent of GNP which has been the rate for many countries for over 20 years.

Environmental issues pose the most difficult problems because of their timescale – it may take 10, 20 or more years to feel benefits from actions now, when politicians tend to think, if we are lucky, in five-year horizons. Many people are working on change, however. One challenge is to bring them together into a complete rethink of our security needs and the kinds of institutions and actions required to meet these needs.

VISION – AND PRIORITIES

The issue of recapturing security from the military and defining it across all its human dimensions is highlighted by Ben Jackson. Once such a point is made, however, it leads to new economic priorities, to different budget allocations, to new forms of power distribution. To really address the issue it helps to approach it from the point of view of the poor. In the dictionary, security is defined as a freedom from fear, as being

untroubled by danger. Poverty at the household and individual level is all about security. Robert Chambers, a rural development specialist, points to five deprivation points in household security:¹

1. Material poverty – a lack of access to assets such as land, shelter, cash.
2. Physical weakness – as poor households were often physically weak.
3. Vulnerability – with few buffers against contingencies so that any little problem could knock them into destitution.
4. Isolation – hard to get products or skills to market.
5. Powerlessness – victims of the powerful.

So many of these chime in with the problem of insecurity. Development – as Jackson and others argue – is about overcoming poverty, injustice and powerlessness. It is a quest for security and safety at local and national level. The poor do not know from day to day, season to season or year to year where the resources they need are coming from. There is a coherence between a broader definition of security and development.

We must start at the level of the poor in the South (and in the North) and work through a political agenda we can use in countries, both rich and poor, to promote real security. If we go along the present military line we ‘blame the victim’, where the poor are seen as a threat. This leads to xenophobia, fear of migrants and racism. The rationale for aid in the 1960s, in the Cold War, or the impetus for land reform in Korea and Taiwan was motivated by a fear of what poverty might breed and the challenge it might make to the political order.

The political problem in recasting security is to say loudly that the way we think of security at present – as the use of, or threat of, military might – does not address what makes for human security, what *really* makes people feel safe. This is not the same as saying free from danger, but is being able to live in societies that can deal with danger and conflicts fairly, without descent into violence, terror or repression.

Development is essential for world peace and requires an agenda that:

- rejects notions of military superiority as the main plank of security policies;
- promotes international rule of law – applicable to all, equally;
- provides support for non-military resolution of conflicts, especially in the South. This takes resources. Even where there is the political

will to solve problems, as in Cambodia and Angola, sufficient resources to bring it about are not made available; an agenda for demilitarization and disarmament with a reallocation of resources to deal with poverty through economic and environmental programmes that tackle the causes of poverty and inequality.

Human needs

In this process, we need to rethink just what human needs are and how they may be met – something that ties in with the concern for powerlessness. Although most discussion on human needs sees food, shelter, clothing and such like as basic needs, Manfred Max-Neef,² director of the Development Alternatives Centre in Santiago, Chile, calls these *satisfiers* of more fundamental human needs. He identifies nine fundamental needs: subsistence, protection, affection, understanding, participation, creation, recreation, identity and freedom. How these fundamental needs are satisfied varies but the needs he identifies are universal. Subsistence, for example, is satisfied by *being* healthy, adaptable, *having* food, shelter and work, *doing* things such as feeding, procreating and resting and *interacting* with the living environment and social setting.

These fundamental needs form a dynamic system in which no single need is more important than another or which necessarily has to be met before another. They are not a hierarchy. They may be met simultaneously, complement each other and be traded-off against each other. However, if the minimal need for subsistence is not met, the other needs may be blocked and a single intense drive to fulfil it is likely. This can be true of other needs too; for example, a complete lack of affection or loss of identity can lead people to extremes of self destruction.

How and with what we seek to fulfil these needs matters. Some can be fulfilled in ways that violate or destroy others; for example, the need for protection might be met by an arms race, a national security doctrine or authoritarianism. These can impair the satisfaction of other needs such as subsistence, affection, freedom, participation and identity. Other pseudo-satisfiers only *appear* to satisfy; for example, formal democracy may only appear to satisfy the need for participation. Some apparent satisfiers of one need inhibit others. Paternalism, for example, may meet the need for protection but inhibits satisfaction of the needs for understanding, participation, freedom and identity. Some satisfiers satisfy only one need, such as food programmes meeting the need for

subsistence while others have synergistic effects, satisfying one need and stimulating satisfaction in others at the same time. Self-managed production, for example, may satisfy the need for subsistence and stimulate satisfaction of needs for understanding, participation, creation, identity and freedom.

Successful development produces satisfiers for the various needs which have synergistic effects on others rather than inhibiting or violating them, as currently happens with the need for protection or security. This approach recognizes that we human beings are multi-faceted creatures that cannot be reduced to a single variable – such as maximizing economic well-being. This becomes apparent when people talk about what security means to them as individuals and households and citizens of a local community, national entity, regional grouping and one world. They draw in concerns about work, freedom from terror, repression, environmental destruction, about the need to be active in shaping their environment and participating in decisions and actions that shape their lives. It is the antithesis of the consumer culture, which defines people by what they can buy and assumes all needs are fulfilled through what they consume.

Recognizing the range of human needs also shows that in redefining security we must face the need to involve a range of areas. This changes the ideological, psychological, economic and social understanding of security. Increasing human understanding of ourselves and our drives, and how we project onto an 'enemy' the attributes in ourselves we cannot come to terms with, is essential, otherwise our attempts to achieve protection or security are doomed. For unless we each understand the way the powerful gain consent for militarism and repression by focusing our anger and hatred on an enemy – either within or without national or ethnic boundaries – attempts to achieve real security are much less likely to succeed.

Education, as the satisfier of our need for understanding, is a slow but essential process. It must draw on the range of thinking underway about how our economies work, our societies function to meet human needs as well as the myriad of attempts by ordinary people to do so through all kinds of local-level cooperation, community action, and resistance to top-down remedies imposed by the powerful.

Spelling out more clearly our visions for a more secure future for humankind is vital if the opportunity for change is not to be wasted. Elements of the vision are around but a new synthesis still has to be developed out of the mess that the collision between capitalism and communism has produced this century. What is clear is that attempts to

deal with the conflicts inherent in such an enterprise by military means, by the use of armed power, will not produce a world in which human needs are met, but one in which they are violated and destroyed.

We have to try to draw together the insights coming from the various people's movements struggling to deal with development, environment and peace and other issues. Likewise the ideas of those in the academic community working in a wide range of disciplines. Another challenge is to engage with and move those in government and military structures towards a new vision of security and to redefine their roles. An essential element in this rethinking is to unpick the image of masculinity and femininity, making roles more flexible, so that what matters is what a person is, and can do, rather than their gender.

While we see the need for a broad new vision and radical changes across economies and societies, it must be grounded in the specific experiences of different people. We cannot do everything at once: it is too much for most of us to take in. In Britain, for example, for people born post-war, with no experience of military service and a sense that economic growth was their birthright, you can pick examples of where the system is failing, and show how they relate to the changes needed. This is what many ngos do. Specific images shock us. We react to things we can relate to. Particular examples can show a pattern of development and how it is systematic of the whole economic and military system.

ACTION

Our vision is both demonstrated by our actions and developed through them. Putting the poor and the dispossessed at the centre of security and development means promoting specific actions that contribute to meeting the human need for protection and which also enhance our chances of meeting our other human needs. The actions needed to promote a peaceful world are legion. They run across boundaries – national and disciplinary. In deciding upon actions, however, it is essential to ask the right questions.

One question concerns the links between the North's policies and the South's willingness to demilitarize. Northern military strategies, as we have seen, are increasingly looking South for enemies and deploying their forces accordingly. Economic and trade policies and the use of resources are heavily skewed in the North's favour. And the one central lesson of the Cold War from the major northern powers has been that if you do not have any military clout, why should they take any notice of

you? Is it surprising, then, that many in the South are not willing to demilitarize or that some want to become regional superpowers in their own right? Control of militarization cannot be imposed on the South while being ignored within the North. Arms control, disarmament and the curbing of the arms trade cannot and will not become global trends unless the heavily militarized North is a willing party to the process.

To avoid resource conflicts means seeing issues in terms of global security and equitable distribution of wealth and not narrow accounting terms of profit and return on capital. Thus changed policies in the North covering, for example, energy conservation and alternative energy sources in the North to reduce consumption, and technology transfer of minimal polluting and efficient use techniques to the South, are likely to minimize the risk of such conflicts. Renewable energy R&D, and its serious application, then, is a security priority to minimize prospects of conflicts over non-renewable energy reserves.

Another set of questions concerns how our new vision linking development, environment and peace relates to the short-, medium- and long-term aspects of security. Answers may be different in different places and require trade-offs which may hurt some in society, who may resist unless society buffers those losers and helps them redeploy. How should we move to a minimal level of spending on the military, and just what should that spending be? What opportunities arise for conversion – in Africa, for example, with no major military industries there is a great opportunity – and how will that be pursued? What institutions are needed for real security and at what levels? These institutions may have to deal with local and national conflicts involving freelance political and military leaders: does this require new conflict management and peacekeeping systems under a UN banner? Major reforms of the international financial and trade institutions – such as the IMF, World Bank and GATT – will be required to get them to play their part, as well as an enforceable legal system with clear rights and obligations.

Actions are, of course, needed at different levels – local, regional, national and international.

Local

Changing our understanding of security begins in the community where we live, in the work that we do, in our schools, shops, offices, factories and homes. Conflict resolution begins in the home, between child and parent, between partners living together. It starts with people where they are and through them engaging in where they, their children and

their children's children want to be. The many voluntary community groups, environmental, peace and development groups have a great role to play in empowering citizens to have their say in security. Now is the time for a citizens' inquiry into security in local communities in every country throughout the world, for the aim of security is to meet needs, not just those of the rich and powerful but of all, including the poor and powerless.

In Canada in the early 1990s, a range of groups organized meetings throughout the country to gauge what people felt their real security needs were. A Security 2000 citizens' enquiry is being discussed by various voluntary groups in Britain for 1995 – a year full of major anniversaries such as the founding of the UN and end of the Second World War. The essential point is that there is an opportunity for ordinary people to be involved in asking and debating the question: what does real security mean for you – locally, as a citizen of your country, as a member of a larger regional grouping, such as the EU or NAFTA, and as a citizen of one world? And what does real security mean for your hopes and fears? How will you try and do things differently in your local community to reach these goals and, finally, what kind of issues and policies should governments and others be working on to ensure security?

We need to be heard and to be active and such an activity is part of meeting what Max-Neef defines as our need for understanding. Feeding this need means being curious, critically conscious and undertaking the investigation, experimentation, analysis, mediation and interpretation that produces the various tools we associate with education, such as books. A citizens' enquiry promotes interactions in the various local institutions through which we can educate ourselves – and our schools, colleges, communities and families.

A shift in emphasis in security from military to the other aspects of security will produce new national budgetary priorities and restructurings. But these will have local effects. For them to be acceptable, provision is needed within communities at local levels for the retraining, redeployment and assistance needed to people affected by the transition – although the same is true for other industries that have seen their markets disappear or decline. That is more likely in communities engaged in understanding their real security needs.

National

The whole of national politics and policies need to be reviewed with a

real security perspective – not simply from a narrow, military-based defence review. Changes will be required in both domestic and foreign policy, as Ben Jackson has shown for the UK. A move to a minimal military posture, based on common security and with military forces expected to contribute to peacekeeping through UN operations, would require some retraining of officers and men to fit them for such work.

It also requires a redefinition of the national interest to meet the challenges of the rich/poor divide and environmental threats. Assumptions about ‘our interests’ – be they American, European or Japanese – cannot, in a real security framework, be based on the right to use whatever resources nations desire wherever they are found. More give, and less material take, will be needed in the North and policies that produce a wider range of satisfiers of the range of human needs than economic goods can provide.

National arms registers, conversion policies and programmes will be required but also policies that conserve and promote renewable sources of energy and materials, debt cancellation and aid policies that create space for developing countries to meet the material needs of their people, and comprehensive trade reform to counter 40 years of the North–South trade trap.³

Regional

A range of supranational groups is developing in the world, which could become not mere competing blocks but warring blocks. However, where they embrace former enemies, as in Europe, they offer real prospects of cutting military expenditure greatly, and directing the resources released into other aspects of human security.

Interchange between people in the different states and among those who are often portrayed as enemies can begin to break down the ignorance that can be turned into fear of the enemy by vested interests for their own ends. This is unlikely to be volunteered by leaders at the top, rather it must be pressed for from below. There is, for example, little sign of the radical thinking needed among the rich, as exemplified by the Group of Seven in their summits, that they have even started asking the right questions for real security.

International

The way the UN and its institutions are reformed by the world’s governments will set the scene for the international dimension of the move to real security. The challenge is to establish an enabling system in

which people can achieve justice. The trend, unfortunately, is one towards a world dominated by large transnational institutions, mostly private corporations but some public, such as the World Bank and IMF. These are increasingly pitting poor people in the South against poor people in the North and may lead to a shift in the North–South axis from being simply geographical to being a certain class of people with the wealth, power and control over resources, located mainly in the North but with a growing minority in the South, serving their interests against the poor and marginalized, North and South.⁴ But this is not yet a monolithic world and their interests are not all the same. Where will the conflicts of interest between them take us? How does militarism, which has been an essentially state controlled enterprise, fit into this future – will it, too, become privatized?

Effective, democratic international institutions will be needed to monitor, regulate and control the activities of transnational actors so they contribute to real security. Here the UN is central. The UN Charter begins ‘We the peoples’ (see Figure 6.1) but it is run and misrun by governments. However it is the only global institution we have with the potential to deal with the vast range of global challenges to humanity. It is only likely to be restructured in ways beneficial to humankind through people-pressure on governments worldwide for a reform of the UN to meet the needs of our individual and collective security. This includes jettisoning the old Roman dictum ‘if you want peace, prepare for war’ and replacing it with ‘if you want peace, prepare for peace’, as Michael Renner of the Worldwatch Institute argues.⁵ He points out that ‘The \$8.3 billion that the United Nations spent on peacekeeping from 1948 to 1992 is a trifling fraction – less than three one-hundredths of one per cent – of the roughly \$30 trillion devoted to traditional military purposes over the same period’.⁶ As part of the development of an alternative, non-violent system for the settlement of conflicts he calls for:

- a shift from offensive weapons and strategies to ones that can defend but not attack; and
- strengthening international peacekeeping and peacemaking capacity.

To achieve this second goal, a reinvigorated UN is required which, he suggests:

- manages an arms transfer register and oversees progressive disarmament with strict limits on military arsenals;

**WE THE PEOPLES
OF THE UNITED NATIONS
DETERMINED**

to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetimes has brought untold sorrow to mankind, and

to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and

to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained, and

to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom

AND FOR THESE ENDS

to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbors, and

to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security, and

to ensure, by the acceptance of principles and the institution of methods, that armed force shall not be used, save in the common interest, and

to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples,

**HAVE RESOLVED TO
COMBINE OUR EFFORTS TO
ACCOMPLISH THESE AIMS.**

Figure 6.1 The beginning of the charter of the UN

- runs a 'well-endowed and competently staffed international disarmament verification agency';
- has a trained peacekeeping force at its disposal, with adequate funding, with peace academies studying successes and failures in mediation, devising new methods for peaceful conflict resolution and providing training. This could be backed up by a second line

- peacemaking force, with the military capability to deter aggression and enforce cease-fire agreements;
- a reformed security council, representative of the world's population and contribution to the UN, without vetoes and with two-thirds majority voting powers;
- a second chamber to the government representative General Assembly of the UN – a 'world citizens assembly' – with the UN defending individual human rights on security.

Whatever ways are sought, and these are just one set of proposals, the aim is to make the UN the first, and routine, recourse for peacemaking. Despite its apparent distance from the local community, success in this could affect poor people from Bosnia to Somalia, and throughout the world.

RESEARCHERS AND CAMPAIGNERS

At each of these levels, we have to ask if the existing institutions, policy instruments and information are sufficient to meet our human needs and our real security requirements. Here researchers and campaigners could play a major role in the mobilization for action.

The responsibility of researchers, whether in universities and colleges, in industry, think-tanks, governments or pressure groups, is immense. All too often, the most inquiring of minds is constrained by academic norms, and passively fails to engage in any independent analysis of the issues facing the human community, content instead to operate within those narrow intellectual limits considered acceptable. Yet there is a fundamental responsibility for the researcher to question this accepted 'wisdom', which is so often moribund, and instead seek to develop a critical analysis of our predicament and explore creative alternatives.

Just as important is the need for interdisciplinary study. Usually the issues of development, environment and security are perceived as quite separate, whereas, as we have seen, the interconnections are crucial if we are to have any real chance of understanding and countering our predicament.

The researcher has, furthermore, to seek every means to communicate with the human community at large, not least the campaigning and policy-forming groups active in trying to create a

genuine new world order. In doing so, the wider community will be informed, and thereby empowered to make a far more effective contribution to changing attitudes and policies.

Campaigning groups from a wide range of areas – such as peace, development, environment – have a major role to play in promoting both public discussion and pressing for action. But their role goes beyond that, for they are at least debating issues at what we might call the right end of the spectrum when so many political ‘leaders’ are off at the other end fighting over nuances of policies that are likely to lead us further down a confrontational path.

The immense challenge for public interest groups is to take some time out from each one’s specific, individual interest to see how they relate to a broader picture of human security and the means of achieving it. Of how it challenges the consumer ideology emerging in the world which dooms the majority to the role of jealous spectators. Campaigning groups that simply continue along lines that reflect essentially a capitalist division of protest, with a niche for every conscience, will diminish their power and impact. However, if they operate as a range of people in different groups but with a broad shared vision working together towards it, they will reinforce each other and move the whole debate, policy process and actions to their end of the spectrum. Undoubtedly arguments over particular priorities will remain, but at least they will be within a real human security framework.

CHOICE AND ACTION

Any attempt to redress inequalities in an environmentally-constrained world will be seen, to a considerable extent, as a threat to the security of the rich and powerful. At the same time, any attempt by them to maintain the *status quo* through military and other means is fundamentally self-defeating. The global system is too integrated and environmentally constrained to continue to permit a minority of the population to live in secure isolation from the majority for ever.

Action to produce a peaceful and stable planetary system is aided by the extensive intellectual and practical efforts over the past two decades aimed at integrating our understanding of development and environmental processes. However, this integration still has to be extended to incorporate an understanding of processes of international security and the dangers of applying those processes as an answer to

North/South polarization. There is an urgent need to do this, and to do so in a truly global context.

We might expect or hope for action by four broad groups or interests. The first is the governments of the major northern states. Sadly, there is little or no sign of political wisdom coming from these quarters at present, and our hopes of leadership from these states would be best discounted, at least in the short term. Although there is little sign from western governments yet, it is possible. It was, after all, the Gorbachev leadership in the former Soviet Union that produced a radical set of policies built on much background work over many years. In other Eastern European states, people pressure played a much greater role.

The second is governments and leaderships in the South, where, once again, wisdom and vision are desperately needed. There are some signs of hope here, especially with the steady evolution of the Group of 15, but previous experience of disunity in the Group of 77 and the Non-Aligned Movement should remind us of the problems of getting effective action. Even so, the activities of just a few states can be positive and, by speaking with a voice which breaks the already stagnant paradigm of the new world order, an impact might just possibly be had on the more powerful states of the North.

The other two groups are those researchers and ngos in the South and in the North which are working towards the common agenda of a peaceful global environment for development. They can form a common thread of concern across the world, can evolve a shared vision of what might be achieved and push for change to achieve this vision, while warning of the violent and unstable alternatives. Ultimately, they must make common cause with governments and international organizations who will eventually come to recognize the need for changes in attitudes and in the very structures of power as the present world ‘order’ becomes increasingly unworkable. Their present role is, to an extent, a prophetic role, in the sense of ‘foretelling the possible’ and putting into practice whatever elements of real security they can wherever they can. It is the process of bringing forward the ideal of a more peaceful and stable world and making that ideal an early reality.