

If you want peace, prepare for peace

It is time to jettison the 2000-year old Roman dictum

'if you want peace, prepare for war' and replace it with 'if you want peace, prepare for peace'. That means changing our behaviour at all levels. The major northern powers during the Cold War taught one central lesson: that, in the end, to be listened to requires military clout. They need to learn another.

Not surprisingly, many in the South are unwilling to demilitarise and some countries want to become regional or global superpowers in their own right. Control of militarisation cannot be imposed on the South while being ignored within the North. Arms control, disarmament and the curbing of the arms trade will not become global trends unless the heavily militarised North is a leading party to the process.

This will create new priorities. For example, to avoid resource conflicts means seeing renewable energy R&D, and its serious application, as a security priority to minimise prospects of conflicts over non-renewable energy reserves. Energy conservation and technology transfer of minimal polluting and efficient-use techniques to the South are also likely to minimise the risk of such conflicts.

Promoting real security requires wide-ranging actions:

Internationally

effective, democratic institutions will contribute to real security. Here, the UN is central. But it is only likely to be restructured in ways beneficial to humankind as a whole through people pressure on governments worldwide. In reinventing the UN for the next 50 years, it should be able to:

- manage an arms transfer register and oversee progressive disarmament with strict limits on military arsenals;
- run a well-endowed and competently staffed international disarmament verification agency;
- have a trained peacekeeping force at its disposal, with adequate funding, linked to peace academies studying successes and

failures in mediation, devising new methods for peaceful conflict resolution and providing training;

- have a reformed security council, representative of the world's population and contribution to the UN;
- manage a global demilitarisation fund.

Outside of governments, researchers and non-governmental organisations in the South and in the North working towards the common agenda of a peaceful global environment for development can play a major catalytic role. 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.

The UN charter begins:

WE THE PEOPLES OF THE UNITED NATIONS DETERMINED

to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime 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 neighbours, 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

Nationally,

security needs to be redefined. Britain should:

1. Set up a broad ranging National Commission on human security to review all national policies from a real security perspective – not simply a narrow, military-based defence review.
2. The Government should stop subsidising arms sales through export credits and fundamentally review its policies in this area, as proposed in an Open Letter to the President of the Board of Trade signed by over 150 MPs.
- It should immediately stop using export credits to back arms sales to repressive regimes, regions of conflict and to countries with excessive military spending.
3. The Government should also switch most national R&D away from military to civil uses that offer benefits to our broader security interests.
4. The Government should work towards a binding Europe-wide Code of Conduct to control arms sales.
5. Non-governmental organisations, academics and campaigners should grasp the current opportunity to influence the European Union's plans for a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), by developing links across Europe. The CFSP opens the door for significantly greater coordination of security policy at an EU level, including 'eventually, the framing of defence policy'. Europe cannot promote development through aid while promoting war through the arms trade.

There is an immense challenge for campaigning and public interest groups - for example in peace, development, environment, poverty, and consumer rights - to take time to relate each one's individual interest to a broader picture which concerns human security and how to achieve it. The groups can then reinforce each other and move the whole debate, policy process and actions to their end of the spectrum.

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a world divided?

Globally, and for the past half century, more than 15% of government spending each year has been devoted to military expenditure – between 4.5 and 7% of global GNP.

- Total world military spending is about \$750 billion a year – the equivalent of the combined annual incomes of the poorest half of the world's people. The Third World spends about a fifth of the global total.

Current approaches to security risk creating a more insecure, divided world rather than a peaceful future.

- Over 100 major conflicts have happened since 1945. Most had an East-West dimension fuelled by the Cold War but were fought in the developing countries of the South. Most of the 20 million people killed and 50 million people injured lived in the developing countries. Despite the new and bloody conflicts in the former Eastern bloc, the greatest numbers of direct and indirect victims of conflict continue to be in the Third World – just as during the Cold War.
- The military competes with the civilian sector for human resources. Of the total population, only 1% works in the military sector but more than 20% of all scientists and engineers are employed by the military.
- From 1948 to 1992, the United Nations (UN) spent \$8.3 billion on peacekeeping. This is a fraction – less than 0.03% – of the roughly \$30 trillion devoted to traditional military purposes over the same period.

We need a more broadly-based approach that redefines the concept in more than just military terms and tackles the root causes of conflict which are beyond the reach of weapons.

Britain spends far more of its national wealth on the military than the average of its major European allies. In 1994, it was 3.4% compared to 2.4%.

- A gradual decline in defence spending since the peak years of 1985-86 has brought military spending back in real terms only to the level in 1979.
- Since the late 1960's, about half of British government expenditure on research and development (R&D) and between 20 to 30% of UK R&D spending has gone on the military. The Ministry of Defence (MoD) still consumes over 40% of the government's total R&D spend. R&D has consistently absorbed up to 20% of annual defence procurement expenditure during the post-war era.
- Britain is the sixth largest arms exporter in the world - with 80% of sales going to the Third World.
- The British government actively supports selling arms through the £10 million a year Defence Export Sales Organization (DESO), based within the MoD but with offices around the world, through arms fairs, and through the DTI's Export Credit Guarantee Department (ECGD), which underwrites British companies doing business in countries regarded as credit risks.
- Over the past six years, arms sales, which account for only 1.7% of the UK exports, have received 33% of all export credits. In 1993/94, 48% of all export credits backed arms sales – ie £1973 million out of £4086 million.



Today, peace and security are threatened by:

1. The deep polarization of the world's population into small areas of relative wealth and much larger areas of relative poverty;
2. Environmental constraints on economic development options;
3. World-wide militarisation which is the primary legacy of the Cold War.

There is a great risk of a North/South axis of confrontation developing which is likely to be expressed in:

- conflicts over resources, such as water, oil, minerals and food;
- migration, caused partly by a desire for a better life, partly by environmental pressures and partly by conflicts;
- increased economic competition between North America, the European Union (EU) and East Asia;
- a more vigorous political and military response from the South.

A military response to these dangers is likely to be counterproductive. Yet that is currently what is on offer.

The easing of Cold War tensions leaves

a massive military complex searching for a new role. New 'threats' offer job creation and preservation opportunities for military machines. Western strategists see two particular future threats coming from the South:

1. Instability, through movements which threaten the power of local elites and related northern interests, as has frequently happened in Latin America.
2. The evolution of regimes thought to pose a more open and direct threat, especially in areas of high resource significance, as with Iraq in 1990-91.

The prime response they are developing is a military one. This takes many forms, with most branches of the armed forces competing for support.

In the USA, the Navy and Marine Corps believe they have an unrivalled capacity to 'keep the violent peace' in the South after the Cold War. At the same time, the US Air Force is developing extraordinarily long-range bombing strategies and the US Army is bidding for funding for special operations forces. Even the Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI or 'Star Wars') is being adapted to take on Third World missiles, and new kinds of nuclear weapons are being researched to allow a military response to North/South tensions.

In the UK, Trident is being sold as able to deal with Third World 'threats' and a new

assault carrier, HMS Ocean, is being commissioned for a global role.

But in the end, militarisation is self-defeating, since it simply offers more weapons to fuel global violence. 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.

Solutions to these potential threats

lie principally in the political and economic arenas, namely:

- Reversing militarisation through arms control and disarmament, which should extend to the full range of weapons of mass destruction, together with control of arms transfers and the progressive diversification away from arms manufacture;
- Radically changed policies towards the South by the northern industrialised countries including comprehensive trade, debt and aid reform which would, over a period of years, involve a redistribution of wealth from North to South;
- Promoting environmentally sustainable development that permits a greatly improved standard of living for the majority of the world's population;
- Reorienting future development in the industrialised countries to be sustainable;
- Creating an international capacity to respond rapidly and effectively to any future changes in the global ecosystem.

Switching away from conventional military approaches

to security faces three core forms of opposition:

1. Political and economic timescales are too short.
2. The uncertainty involved makes it easy for governments to hope for the best to avoid facing up to uncomfortable choices.
3. Evolving a sustainable and peaceful global economic system inevitably means considerable costs for the wealthy industrialised states of the North. It means facing head on the question of whether these states have a legitimate international right to maintain their standards and styles of living, if need be by military force.

An enormous, but as yet unseized, opportunity

now exists to escape from the vicious development trap in which militarisation, environmental degradation, and poverty

threaten human development. Earlier East-West divisions masked the central divide in the world which remains the rich world/poor world division over the distribution and use of power and resources. A less divided North cannot close the gates around it and keep what it has. Change linked to a new vision of security is needed in North-South relations if we are to live together on a peaceful planet.

An essential step

is the conversion of military capabilities, personnel, production and technologies to civilian uses in both developing and industrialised countries. Fortunately, the obstacles to conversion often cited in industrialised countries of an entrenched military-industrial base do not apply to most developing countries as most do not have nuclear, biological or chemical weapons or well-developed arms industries. In Africa, only Egypt, South Africa and Nigeria have a well-developed military industrial base.

In the UK, however, a military/industrial network of defence planners, politicians and industrial interests exerts considerable influence over technological expertise and capabilities - to the detriment of the UK economy and of global security.

Converting from militarism

Militarism is an excessive reliance on war preparation. It has social, economic, political and ideological aspects and depends on the contemplation of, and preparation for, massive destruction through the use of military force.

The Cold War created a permanent peace-time military-industrial capability at sustained high levels of defence spending. The end of the Cold War should be treated as the end of every other major conflict in the past whereby the traditional industrial structure is restored so that predominantly civil industries supply the declining need for defence equipment.

Reducing defence expenditure and arms conversion would have positive economic benefits according to the International Monetary Fund. It suggests that international trade would benefit from an internationally co-ordinated decrease in defence spending of 20%.

In the UK, the high level of military spending has lowered the potential for investment in the overall economy which, in turn, has contributed to the relatively poor post-war economic performance.

The critical element for comprehensive conversion is a clear relationship between disarmament and economic policy. This links new concepts of common security, stressing environmental and developmental priorities, to the irreversibility of transition from a military to civil economy. Society can then release the creativity, skills,

scientific and technical expertise that sustain militarism to deal with other areas of immense concern for future human security such as understanding ecological changes and developing sustainable technologies that minimise resource use.

Governments, using the peace dividend, should give a clear lead through a new national agenda for civil investment and R&D in areas like environmental protection and infrastructure investment. A comprehensive programme to diversify out of militarism should include:

1. A re-orientation from military to civil R&D;
2. Regional initiatives to help defence-dependent communities;

In the UK, action to promote diversification might include:

- a Diversification Agency within the the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) with clear powers to coordinate programmes between the DTI and the MoD;
- a low interest fund to finance diversification and retraining;
- re-directing at least half of the government research and development budget which goes on the military to key civilian areas;
- shifting current export credit support from arms to civilian industries.

Such a programme could create half a million jobs in the UK and add two per cent to the economy's growth by the end of the decade.

Meeting human needs

How and with what we fulfil our needs matters. The aim is to fulfil our various needs in ways that do not violate or destroy others. Food, shelter, clothing and such like help satisfy more fundamental, universal, human needs - those for subsistence, protection, affection, understanding, participation, creation, recreation, identity, and freedom.

Our need for protection, for example, might be met by an arms race, a national security doctrine, or authoritarianism, which can impair the satisfaction of other needs, such as subsistence, affection, freedom, participation and identity. Satisfying our needs involves our active participation. Subsistence (simply the need to physically survive or subsist),

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.

We may undermine attempts to achieve protection or security unless we understand ourselves better, and how we project onto an 'enemy' the attributes in ourselves with which we cannot come to terms. 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.

Promoting real security requires an agenda that:

- rejects notions of military superiority as the main plank of security policies;
- promotes the international rule of law – applicable to all, equally;
- provides support for non-military resolution of conflicts;
- includes an agenda for demilitarisation and disarmament that reallocates resources to economic and environmental programmes that tackle the causes of poverty and inequality.

World military spending

could be cut by four fifths and still be at around 1% of GNP which has been the

rate for some countries for over 20 years.

As a first step, the UK should bring military spending down to 2% of GNP by the year 2000 to around the European average. This is enough for Britain to meet its two core military objectives of defending home territory and coastal waters and playing a major part in overseas deployments within carefully worked-out UN-controlled or other non-partisan forces when called upon – for example, in peace-keeping.

This reduction is small compared to Britain's

post-Second World War reductions and is comparable with cutbacks after the Korean War - both successfully implemented. It will require:

- stopping the expansion of Britain's preparations to fight wars in the Third World and curtailing funding which increases militarisation in the Third World;
- cutting weapons systems and personnel not needed after the Cold War and winding down Britain's end-of-empire overseas deployments.

Under these proposals, Britain's military spending

would fall at about 8.5% a year to about £12 billion a year (in current prices) by 1999/2000 from the £22.7 billion planned for 1995/96. This would generate total savings of £42 billion – representing a £1000 of every British adult's tax over the period (rising from £50 a year in 1994/95 to £300 by the year 2000).

The savings should fund

programmes for 'real security' as part of a fundamental shift away from Northern security policies based on military might. Half of these resources should be re-directed into domestic spending to:

- invest in a programme for shifting Britain's economy away from making arms to civilian production and jobs;
 - fund pressing needs at home in a time of constrained government budgets.
- And half to:
- achieve the UN aid target of 0.7% of GNP by the end of the decade;
 - cancel the poorest countries' debts.