

world's growing "interdependence" and the emergence of "global problems" which threatened all states regardless of their social system, these themes received increased prominence in Gorbachev's speech to the Party Congress. He warned that global problems imperilled "the very foundations of the existence of civilization."⁸⁶ He called for a new approach and new thinking:

Global problems that affect all mankind cannot be solved through the efforts of a single state or group of states. What is needed here is cooperation on a worldwide scale — the close, constructive interaction of the majority of countries. . . . As you see, comrades, there are many problems — large-scale and complex problems. But one cannot fail to see that, on the whole, the way they have been comprehended lags behind the scope and depth of current tasks.⁸⁷

Although some portions of Gorbachev's speech were imbued with orthodox stereotypes denouncing the misanthropic nature of imperialism, other sections adopted a quite different tone. On the whole, Gorbachev's speech was characterized by a deliberate effort to de-emphasize the role of class cleavages in international politics and to transcend the traditional *kto-kogo* (who will defeat whom) orientation of past Soviet commentary on East-West relations. Instead of portraying imperialism as the sole cause of war and the only threat to Soviet security, Gorbachev several times pointed to modern technology, with its tendency to acquire a life and momentum of its own, as the key problem. He warned that in the nuclear age, the "time factor" is becoming very important.⁸⁸ "[W]hen nuclear weapons are at the ready, time and space lose their customary outlines for civilization and mankind becomes the prisoner of chance."⁸⁹ He appealed for new perspectives and new efforts to confront the danger threatening mankind:

The American President once said that if our planet were threatened by a landing of beings from another planet, the U.S.S.R. and the US

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 54.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 19.