

The third reason is the artificial, premeditated, and carefully coordinated nature of the Soviet campaign on behalf of this "new thinking." Gorbachev's speech to the Twenty-Seventh Party Congress triggered an avalanche of similar statements in the Soviet press. The problem is, that despite the scores of articles that have been published dealing with this theme, Soviet commentators have done little more than quote or paraphrase Gorbachev's remarks. They sound like so many broken records, stuck repeating the same few permitted phrases over and over again without adding anything of substance to them or providing any concrete examples of how the "new thinking" might apply to past, present or future Soviet foreign policy.

The contrast between this carefully stage-managed approach to foreign policy and the Soviet press' more open treatment of domestic issues is especially striking and disheartening. In the last two years, we have seen the emergence of controversy and real debate within the Soviet press on such sensitive issues as the radical overhauling of the economy, the relaxation of censorship in the arts, and the legacy of Stalin. Reformers and conservatives have articulated conflicting positions and clashed repeatedly. Above all, people are beginning to find their own voice. They are learning how to speak publicly in their own words with a freshness and individuality that has not been seen for decades in the Soviet Union. However, when it comes to the public discussion of East-West relations, time has stood still. There is virtually no controversy, there is little individuality, and the present set of self-serving slogans are simply mechanically reiterated in much the same way that a different group of slogans were parroted in previous years.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁴ There are some faint stirrings of controversy, but the disagreements over foreign policy are still far more muted than the debates over domestic issues. See the analyses contained in Elizabeth Teague, "Polemics Over 'Euromissiles' in the Soviet Press," *Radio Liberty Research Bulletin*, RL 113/87, 20 March 1987, pp. 1-3; Viktor Yasmann, "Telebridges with the West," *ibid.*, RL 129/87, 8 April 1987, pp. 1-5; Eugene Rumer, "Soviet Writers Clash Over Morality of Nuclear Deterrence," *ibid.*, RL 299/87, 13 July 1987, pp. 1-4; Thomas Nichols, "Intellectual Pacifists' Criticized by Military Officer," *ibid.*, RL 308/87, 28 July 1987, pp. 1-4; Elizabeth Teague, "Stalin Blamed for Hitler's Rise to Power," *ibid.*, RL 354/87, 1 September 1987, pp. 1-2.