

is attempting to improve the Soviet Union's severely tarnished image and to undermine support for Star Wars. But they believe this is only one part of the picture. While it is true that Gorbachev is attempting to construct a more effective political platform for himself and for the Soviet Union, it is argued that in all countries political platforms are framed with multiple constituencies in mind. Gorbachev's emphasis on the political — as opposed to purely military — aspects of security does more than enhance his foreign image. It also enables him to counter some of the more militant perspectives that exist within Soviet policy-making circles. The anxiety that resulted from the Soviet Union's long unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing, the discomfort over the Soviet decision to sign a treaty on intermediate-range nuclear forces which obligates it to give up far more warheads than the US, and the fears about the intrusive on-site verification resulting from the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty and other arms control measures constitute potent sentiments with which Gorbachev must contend. The new emphasis on the political dimensions of security legitimizes a more innovative approach, and for this reason it should be welcomed by the West.¹¹⁵

Despite the need for care in assessing what is still a very fluid situation, there are some solid grounds for cautious optimism. In his relatively short period of rule, Gorbachev has certainly not succeeded in transforming the Soviet Union. But he has been successful in attacking old routines, in shaking up Soviet society, in creating ferment and in stimulating a questioning of established verities that has not been seen in the Soviet Union since the 1920s. Stalin's legacy is under attack, some of the "unpersons" of Soviet history (such as

¹¹⁵ In the period since the meeting of the Warsaw Pact in May 1987, Soviet spokesmen have been cautiously referring to the concept of "sufficiency" as one of the basic principles of Soviet military policy. Since sufficiency suggests much more modest military requirements than superiority or parity, this could, at some point in the future, become a significant new element in Soviet foreign policy doctrine. However, thus far, the notion of sufficiency seems to be little more than a politically beneficial slogan, which has yet to be defined, rather than an operational concept shaping Soviet policy. (For two recent instances where Gorbachev made a fleeting reference to sufficiency, see his article in *Pravda* on 17 September 1987 and his speech of 2 November 1987 commemorating the seventieth anniversary of the Revolution.)