

the prospects for a productive East-West dialogue on security issues have been enhanced by the new perspectives championed by Gorbachev.

Clearly, it is more difficult to assess Gorbachev's contribution to Soviet foreign policy than it is to analyze Stalin's, Khrushchev's or Brezhnev's. A number of years have passed since these earlier Soviet leaders departed from the world stage, while the drama initiated by Gorbachev's accession to power is still in its first act. Gorbachev is relatively new to the job, his full political programme has not yet been revealed, and we do not know how much of his political agenda he will be able to accomplish. Nonetheless, given the controversies that exist among foreign observers and the need to establish a sound foundation for Western policy, it is important to make an interim assessment of Gorbachev's approach based upon the evidence that is presently available to us.

Our analysis attempts to do this through a careful examination of his call for "new thinking" in international politics. We will proceed as follows: First, we will look at what authoritative Soviet spokesmen have actually been saying about East-West relations. We will set out the record of Soviet pronouncements both at the Twenty-Seventh Party Congress and in subsequent commentaries. Following this, we will attempt to arrive at a sound and balanced appraisal of Gorbachev's approach through an examination of the arguments of those who are highly skeptical about the Soviet Union's new posture and the counter-arguments of those who are more optimistic.

⁷⁹ More positive assessments of Gorbachev's foreign policy are contained in Matthew Evangelista, "The New Soviet Approach to Security," *World Policy Journal*, III, No. 4, 1986, pp. 561-599; Charles Glickham, "New Directions for Soviet Foreign Policy," *Radio Liberty Research Bulletin*, Supplement 2/86, 6 September 1986; Franklyn Griffiths, "'New Thinking' in the Kremlin," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, XLIII, No. 3, 1987, pp. 20-24; F. Stephen Larrabee and Allen Lynch, "Gorbachev: The Road to Reykjavik," *Foreign Policy*, No. 65, Winter 1986-87, pp. 3-28; Joseph S. Nye, Jr., et al., *How Should America Respond to Gorbachev's Challenge?: A Report of the Task Force on Soviet New Thinking*, New York: Institute for East-West Security Studies, 1987; Robert C. Tucker, "Gorbachev and the Fight for Soviet Reform," *World Policy Journal*, IV, No. 2, 1987, pp. 179-206; Martin Walker, "Gorbachev Speech a Major Change in Soviet Ideology," *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, 1 March 1987, p. 8.