

The General Secretary's Report to a Party Congress is crafted so as to proclaim the official line on domestic and foreign policy, and this is exactly what Gorbachev's speech did. It provided the marching orders for the legions of Soviet public affairs commentators, Party ideologists and international relations specialists who have dutifully quoted and paraphrased these passages innumerable times in the period since the Congress. Over and over again, they have faithfully echoed his words that security in the nuclear age can be achieved only by political means, that security can only be mutual, since a nation will not truly be secure until its adversaries also feel safe, that the world is becoming increasingly interdependent, that global problems, which threaten all nations, can be solved only through international co-operation, and that the ultimate global problem is the threat of the extinction of human civilization in a nuclear war. Articles have appeared in all of the most authoritative publications, such as the ideological journal *Kommunist*, the Party newspaper *Pravda*, and the leading foreign affairs journals *Mirovaia ekonomika i mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia* (*World Economy and International Relations*) and *SShA (USA)* with such titles as: "New Thinking — A Demand of the Nuclear Century," "A New Philosophy of Foreign Policy," "New Political Thinking — Imperative of the Present Day," and "New Realities and New Thinking."¹⁰²

It is now an everyday occurrence to find Soviet spokesmen calling for "new thinking" in international politics. The key question, however, is not the frequency or even the eloquence of these statements, but their operational significance for the day-to-day conduct of Soviet foreign policy. This brings us to the disagreement, alluded to at the beginning of this chapter, between those Western analysts who are highly skeptical about the significance of these statements and those who are more optimistic and hopeful.

Despite the barrage of articles and speeches proclaiming the "new thinking," the skeptics remain unconvinced. There are four main

¹⁰² *Kommunist*, 1986, No. 10, pp. 113-124; *Pravda*, 10 July 1987, p. 4; *Mirovaia ekonomika i mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia*, 1986, No. 10, pp. 16-25; *SShA* 1987, No. 2, pp. 3-15.