

frequently emphasized, such that conventional war may approach nuclear war in its devastation.<sup>62</sup> An economic argument is also sometimes advanced, which admits the negative effect of massive military expenditures on the domestic economy, but in the present context this occurs less frequently than the security argument.<sup>63</sup>

It is important to note that it is the principle of political means, and to some extent the principle of reciprocity, that potentially make the practice of reasonable sufficiency one of engagement rather than isolationism. It would seem that these ideas involve, at a minimum, a commitment to pursue political dialogue in order to decrease the likelihood of conflict and the threat of war. At a more active level, the principle of political means specifies that methods such as international dialogue and diplomacy, international agreements, and negotiated reductions can all serve to diminish threat, avert conflict and prevent war. This is significant because there is a potential argument that policies based on the principle of reasonable sufficiency (especially its sub-principles of asymmetric responses and unilateral actions) are essentially isolationist, allowing a state to withdraw into itself by defining its own narrow security interests without reference to the broader international context. At this time this is clearly not the case with the Soviet Union.

### III. THE PRACTICE OF REASONABLE SUFFICIENCY

The development of the idea of reasonable sufficiency has gone through three phases since its inception. In the first phase (roughly 1985 to mid-1987) the concept was largely a political idea, useful as a term to argue in favour of or justify certain foreign and domestic policy goals that needed to be carried out for political, economic and military reasons. In this sense, the idea of reasonable sufficiency attempted to make a

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<sup>62</sup> On these points see: Yazov, *Defensive Development*, pp. 7-8; Yu. Lebedev, A. Podberezkin, "Voennye doktriny i mezhdunarodnaya bezopasnost" (Military doctrines and international security), *Kommunist*, 13 September 1988, pp. 110-11, 114-15.

<sup>63</sup> For example: Lebedev and Podberezkin, "Military doctrines", p. 111.