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As 1983 came to an end, the official East-West dialogue on arms control had been suspended indefinitely. As they had long promised, the Soviets withdrew from negotiations when NATO began to deploy its new Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces. When the arms control process will be re-started remains to be seen, but the Soviet walkout focuses attention on the difficulty of achieving agreement in a "grey area" of strategic arms competition between mutually suspicious superpowers. Yet, problems are not confined to the divergent views of the United States and the Soviet Union; even among the members of the NATO Alliance there are substantive areas of disagreement on questions of Alliance nuclear policy. The issue of "No First Use" of nuclear weapons is one of the most contentious. In two articles of exceptional importance, Michael Carver and Jonathan Alford explore, respectively, the pros and cons of adopting a "No First Use" policy, bringing to this complex subject the rigorous intellectual inquiry that its importance commands.

This brings us to 1984 and George Orwell, whose writings are receiving renewed and timely attention. A rigorous intellectual himself, Orwell never compromised his integrity for the sake of political expediency and was scornful of those of his generation who did. Empty rhetoric and moral posturing were not part of his repertoire. A humanist in belief and experience, he recognized the power and danger of simplistic ideology swallowed uncritically and welded to political action. Through his writings Orwell urged his fellow intellectuals to examine the moral and human consequences of their ideas and their actions. Clearly, he has much to say to the 1980s, and his writings have been seized upon by spokesmen on both sides of the ideological divide who wish to claim him as their own. Patrick Armstrong explores this phenomenon in light of Orwell's experience and writings and concludes that he belongs to neither camp. Indeed, it is a singular mark of his courage and independence that he never allowed others to do his thinking for him. That is the central message of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, and it belongs to us all.

The world portrayed in that work was dominated by three totalitarian power blocs engaged in permanent low-intensity conflict over the control of marginal territories and the allegiance of their peoples. Today's reality falls short of Orwell's predictions in several respects. Free political institutions and practices are enjoyed by a significant proportion of the world's population and even totalitarian regimes have been shown to be vulnerable to pressure. The proliferation of new states indicates a trend towards multi-polarity, not a consolidation and concentration of state power and alliances in the other direction. Yet low-intensity conflict, which would have shocked western publics when Orwell was writing in 1947, is indeed a fact of

life. When war at its most destructive level can no longer serve any rational policy objective, new — or perhaps ancient — means are brought to bear, reflecting mankind's adaptability. Vittorfranco Pisano considers the Italian experience of clandestine Soviet-bloc operations. He places it firmly within the context of the East-West struggle whose ideological features Orwell recognized some forty years ago.