

separation of the maxim's descriptive value from his simultaneous rejection of the rationality of using nuclear weapons amounted to the same thing. Even so, the Kremlin may well have been coming to appreciate the utility of a specific pronouncement. An article in the issue of *USA: Economics, Politics and Ideology* for December 1981 seems a move in this direction. In it G.A. Trofimenko, one of Moscow's foremost "Americanologists," attacked "semi-educated theoreticians" in the West who maintain that Soviet adherence to Clausewitz's dictum means the Soviet Union believes it is possible to employ nuclear force for political ends. For clearly, Trofimenko wrote, since a struggle with such weapons "cannot serve any sensible political goal," such a war cannot be seen as a "practical" instrument of policy. So it is an instrument "which cannot be used," and one which can be discussed only "in the realm of theory."

### **Change made fast**

Doubters might, of course, still dismiss this article as being at best a trial balloon that did not reflect an unchanged Soviet doctrine. Yet the last basis for this position disappeared after Konstantin U. Chernenko's highly-publicized speech of April 22, 1981. The occasion — the anniversary of Lenin's death — was a particularly solemn and apt one for the revision of the master's teachings. Similarly, Chernenko himself, as a protégé of Brezhnev, as Secretary of the Central Committee and candidate for the succession, was a figure of considerable stature. And revise Lenin he did. For he proclaimed that any thermonuclear conflict must be considered "a threat to the whole of civilization, or even to life in our world," and branded as "criminal" any attempt to present such a war as "a 'rational,' almost 'legitimate' continuation of policy." Rather, he argued, "any responsible state leader must recognize" that any use of nuclear weapons "places the future of mankind in doubt." As for theorists "on both sides of the Atlantic" who talk of the "limited" use of such systems, Chernenko dismissed their arguments as being dangerous efforts to promote a belief in "the permissibility and acceptability" of a major nuclear confrontation. To counteract such attempts, "the truth about the ruinous consequences of a thermonuclear conflict should be fully realized by all peoples."

In terms of doctrine, then, the Soviet military and political leaders seemed to have met the demands of Pipes and others by clearly rejecting nuclear warfare as a legitimate and rational means of pursuing policy. But this signified that they had ruled out initiating a nuclear conflict as a "policy option" for themselves, not that they will not wage such a struggle if attacked. Brezhnev himself had made this clear in 1979. "We are against the use of nuclear weapons," he wrote, "but extraordinary circumstances and aggression against our country or its allies by another nuclear power could force us to resort to this extreme means of self-defence." So while he pledged that the USSR would "do everything it can to prevent a nuclear war," efforts to raise the nation's war-fighting and war-survival capabilities have continued unabated. Indeed, given Moscow's growing nervousness about the Reagan administration, such efforts may well increase in both scope and intensity during the years ahead.

Evidence of this came in the form of Marshal of the Soviet Union N.V. Ogarkov's booklet *Always in Readiness to Defend the Homeland*, published in March 1982. Since

Ogarkov is Chief of the General Staff, and since his pamphlet appeared as part of the series entitled "Implementing the Decisions of the 26th CPSU Congress," there is little doubt about its authority. In it the marshal makes the usual calls for increased combat-readiness, higher levels of military, patriotic and general education and for the acquisition of modern weaponry. More significant, however, is his call for a mobilization program that would integrate fully the civilian and economic sectors with that of the military. The practical implications of this need not concern us here beyond noting that Ogarkov justifies all this by observing that the "element of surprise" is "today . . . becoming a factor of the greatest strategic importance." Even so, the mere fact that the Soviet Union continues to prepare for waging, if necessary, a thermonuclear war is one that in itself could lead some to question the sincerity, significance and permanence of the doctrinal shift just outlined.

### **Latest revision**

On this issue Ogarkov's booklet is especially helpful. For in justifying the practical measures mentioned, he provides an officially-approved and updated guide to the major tenets of Marxist-Leninist military doctrine as today's Soviet leadership interprets them. This, of course, involves discussing all the general questions already raised on the likelihood, causes and consequences of a major conflict between the superpowers. Even though his comments on these specific matters are spread throughout the marshal's text, and although they frequently are found in contexts that involve more technical military subjects, an internally-consistent statement of Soviet attitudes does emerge that deserves a brief summation.

In the first place, the Chief of the General Staff leaves no doubt that he and his colleagues still consider a nuclear conflict would be a global catastrophe. Thanks to "the enormous qualitative leap forward . . . in the last decades in the development of weaponry," he maintains the latter's use would be "an incalculable calamity for the peoples of the entire world." As for attempts to limit such a disaster, he is extremely pessimistic. Thus, he dismisses suggestions that a nuclear conflict in Europe could occur "without such a war escalating into a world war." For while "one can reason theoretically" about a more limited use of nuclear weapons, Ogarkov clearly states the Soviet leadership's belief "that in practice it is impossible . . . to hold nuclear war within a certain restricted framework." Indeed, he warns that any use of nuclear missiles and "modern weapons" in general "can result in military operations encompassing all the continents of the world from the very outset. Many hundreds of millions of people will inescapably be drawn into the maelstrom of such a war . . ."

Fortunately, in his view, there remains an "absence of a fatal inevitability of war" since the Communist Party, "on the basis of a profound scientific analysis" of the international situation, "has reached the well-substantiated conclusion that it is possible to prevent a world war in today's conditions." Yet this "objective possibility" can only be achieved by "a vigorous and persistent struggle against warmongers of various ilk," chief of which are representatives of the "aggressive imperialism" of the West. This force, under Washington's leadership, today "threatens to unleash a third world war, with the employment of nuclear missile weapons." Against the historical background of imperialism's role in world relations as seen from Moscow,