

One reason for Lenin's failure to clarify and systematize his views on such questions as the inevitability of war and the peaceful coexistence of capitalist and socialist states was his ill health. A stroke in May 1922 sharply curtailed Lenin's political activity, and after a relapse in March 1923, he ceased all writing. This meant that Lenin had only a relatively short period of time to come to terms with the complicated and perplexing international situation which had materialized so unexpectedly by late 1920. Yet, from another perspective, it can also be said that the year and a half which elapsed between Lenin's declaration of a new stage in international politics and his initial stroke in May 1922 provided ample opportunity for at least an attempt at a systematic treatment of this problem. But Lenin was preoccupied with more immediate practical tasks, and once again he manifested his disinterest in fundamental theoretical problems.

It is difficult to acquire a balanced and comprehensive understanding of Lenin's approach to international politics. Soviet spokesmen, especially in their statements directed toward Western audiences, err by exaggerating Lenin's interest in peaceful relations with the capitalist world and by minimizing his commitment to international revolution.<sup>13</sup> On the other hand, many Western analysts exaggerate the priority accorded international revolution in Lenin's thinking, overlook his willingness to make compromises and to establish economic and political ties with capitalist governments, and fail to differentiate sufficiently between Lenin's approach to East-West relations and that of more militant elements within the Bolshevik Party.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> A. Chubar'ian, *Mirnoe sosushchestvovanie: teoriia i praktika*, Moscow: Politizdat, 1976; A. Narochitskii, *Leninskie traditsii vneshnei politiki Sovetskogo Soiuzha*, Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye Otnosheniia, 1977; D. Tomashevsky, "Lenin's Concept of Peaceful Coexistence and the Imperialist Challenge," *International Affairs*, 1982, No. 5, pp. 3-13.

<sup>14</sup> David Shub, *Lenin*, Garden City: Doubleday, 1948; Stanley W. Page, *Lenin and World Revolution*, New York: New York University Press, 1959; Stefan T. Possony, *Lenin: The Compulsive Revolutionary*, Chicago: Regnery, 1964; Richard Pipes, *U.S.-Soviet Relations in the Era of Detente*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1981, pp. 171-180.