

STALIN: DOGMATISM AND RIGIDITY

Although Lenin left an ambiguous doctrinal legacy, there was nothing ambiguous about Soviet foreign policy doctrine by the time Stalin's rule came to an end three decades later. In building upon Lenin's rather diffuse legacy, Stalin accentuated the negative and constantly emphasized the intensity and irreconcilability of the conflict between capitalism and socialism. Leninist grays gave way to Stalinist black-and-white. Whereas Lenin's approach to international politics reflected a high degree of self-confidence, optimism, voluntarism, and flexibility, Stalin's was constrained by his insecurity, pessimism, determinism, and rigidity.

Stalin's approach to international politics was permeated not just by the belief that the Soviet Union lived in a hostile and threatening world, but also by the conviction that *there was little that the Soviet Union could do to alter this situation*. It is the fatalistic determinism of Stalinist thought that distinguishes it most sharply from its Leninist antecedents and from the more optimistic perspective that Khrushchev later adopted.²⁴

²⁴ The Stalinist worldview is discussed in Robert C. Tucker, *The Soviet Political Mind*, New York: Praeger, 1963, pp. 20-35, 166-179; Elliot R. Goodman, *The Soviet Design for a World State*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1960; and Frederic S. Burin, "The Communist Doctrine of the Inevitability of War," *The American Political Science Review*, LVII, No. 2, 1963, pp. 334-354. I have also made use of Paul Marantz, "Prelude to Detente: Doctrinal Change Under Khrushchev," *International Studies Quarterly* XIX, No. 4, 1975, pp. 501-528, and Paul Marantz, "Changing Soviet Conceptions of East-West Relations," *International Journal*, XXXVII, No. 2, 1982, pp. 220-240.