Foreword

THEORY or doctrine fulfills a unique function in Soviet and Communist policy, a function which it is difficult for those reared in a democratic society to appreciate without, so to speak, standing on their heads. In a freely developing society the techniques and rules of political and social action are fairly rigid, operating within a tradition of respect for the individual and his freedom of opinion, thought, and association, whereas the goals of a democratic society are usually defined or redefined piecemeal, as new needs and challenges become generally visible.

In a totalitarian system, on the other hand, no instruments or rules of power are sacrosanct except in so far as they assist and guide the self-appointed ruling group in maximizing its control over the individuals ruled and over all their thinking and actions. The goals of a totalitarian system of power, in contrast, are spelled out in great detail, and the ruling elite measures its successes and failures by the rate at which it approaches the fulfillment of those goals. Described in terms of process, a democratic elite develops through many self-generating and self-directing activities freely carried on within a permissive structure. A totalitarian elite is selected from above, indoctrinated massively and ceaselessly, disciplined by a central authority, and promoted to higher positions or thrust into outer limbo on the basis of both its efficiency and its zeal in achieving predetermined goals as defined at any given time in the monopolistic body of doctrine. This is what gives the driving force to Communist ideology and Soviet policy.

Among the goals which shape Soviet thinking and action the ultimate achievement of a Communist world state is of central significance. It molds the thinking of the Communist elite about the present world system of diverse states, the continuing conflict be-

tween the Communist and all other systems of states, and their duty to strive by any and all means to achieve the goal of an allegedly stateless and conflictless Communist world system. Oddly enough, this basic core of Communist thought and emotion has not previously been examined with all necessary care, in the light of the most authoritative Soviet statements of doctrine. For this reason, Professor Goodman's study fills a very serious gap in our studies of Communist theory and Soviet policy.

One question which readers inevitably ask of any study of Communist doctrine is: Is doctrine really important? Does doctrine "cause" Soviet leaders to act? Or do they merely use doctrine to justify whatever they pragmatically want to do at any given time? There is both a simple and a complex answer to this very legitimate query. Of course, the Soviet leaders do not simply open the sacred books of Marxism-Leninism at random in order to pick out a passage and then decide what to do that day or that month. On the other hand, it must not be forgotten that one of the requirements for survival on the Soviet Olympus is both to master and to "interpret creatively" the basic Communist doctrine, and that Leninism has always emphasized the fruitful interaction between doctrine and action. At the center of Soviet power, the attention to doctrine as a source of power and a broad guide to action remains strong, and access to the levers of power requires a long and disciplined immersion in doctrinal thinking, quite unfamiliar to people who achieve wealth or influence within democratic societies. If doctrine does not dictate Communist actions in a literal sense, it does define the channels or grooves of thought through which decisions are made and actions are taken. Like others who have spent many hours or days in trying to reach the minds of truly indoctrinated Communists, I can testify to the efficiency of doctrine in molding the views of the decision-makers and their apparatus of information and action. Its effects cannot be underestimated except at great peril to democratic societies.

A second question is: Has the author approached his study with his opinions already formed, merely seeking to substantiate ready-made conclusions? Or did he embark on it with the open but not vacant mind which a free society expects of its scholars? In this respect I am perhaps in a unique position to report on Professor Goodman's qualifications, for he first tackled one aspect of this com-

plex problem quite a few years ago, in my seminar at the Russian Institute, and I have had the pleasure and sometimes the sympathetic discomfort of watching him wrestle with doctrinal subtleties and with a vast array of empirical evidence as he developed his investigation into this book. I can also certify that, in order to reduce his study to publishable and readable dimensions, the author has been obliged to omit a large amount of doctrinal and historical evidence that he would have preferred to include. I am therefore able to assure his readers that Professor Goodman approached his subject without predetermined conclusions, that he has built up his findings piecemeal through a conscientious examination of both ideology and action, and that the powerful structure of his analysis stands firmly on the bedrock of evidence.

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