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# STUDENT ESSAY

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CLAUSEWITZ AND THE SOVIETS

BY

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CLAUSEWITZ AND THE SOVIETS

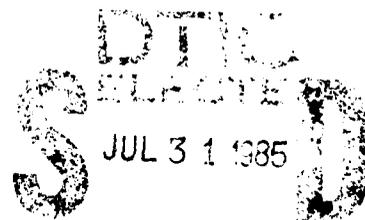
INDIVIDUAL ESSAY

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ABSTRACT

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The basic question is whether the study of Clausewitz would be valuable from the point of view of understanding the Soviets. Data was gathered by examining the heritage of Lenin and specifically his study of Clausewitz. The writings of Lenin were compared with those of the German theorist and an evaluation was made of Soviet military science. For Lenin, Clausewitzian thought provided a theoretical framework for legitimizing the Marx-Engels ideology. Succeeding generations of Soviets were attracted to Clausewitz because of his understanding of war. Clausewitzian theories have become so mingled with Russian military science that the latter cannot be understood without the former. Should the American military officer study Clausewitz? Certainly if he or she has a desire to "know the enemy."

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## CLAUSEWITZ AND THE SOVIETS

V. I. Lenin is eulogized by the Soviets as a brilliant thinker who introduced a new stage in the development of Marxist theory. In addition to being proclaimed as the theorist and architect of the new socialist world, he is also declared the most profound theorist in philosophical problems of modern war, armed forces and military science. An analysis of the essence of war and its relationship to society comprises one of the essential elements of V. I. Lenin's theory. Based on the Soviet need to deify Lenin and to perpetuate his legend, Soviet leaders today spare no effort to diminish the impact of Clausewitz on Lenin's thinking and writings. They accuse the "ideologies" of imperialism and militarism of widespread, deliberate praise for Clausewitz and of exaggerating his contribution to an understanding of war. They accuse Westerners of portraying Lenin as a pupil of Clausewitz in order to achieve greater acclaim for Clausewitz while the same Westerners ignore Lenin's criticism of the German theorist. The Soviets assert that Lenin did not borrow mechanically from Clausewitz. Instead, they claim Lenin critically reworked earlier theories and created, on the basis of dialectical and historical materialism, a totally new doctrine on war, one which differs radically from the teachings of Clausewitz.

What impact did Clausewitz have on Lenin? Did Lenin become a disciple? How much of Marxist-Leninism if any, is Clausewitzian in nature? Is Soviet military science influenced by Clausewitz?

Any attempt to answer these questions has to begin with a look at Lenin's notebook on Clausewitz. Lenin copied passages from On War into his notebook and then made painstaking personal notes in the margins or directly into the

text. Why did Lenin decide to study Clausewitz? Probably because of Lenin's interest in the nature and origins of World War I. Viewed in that light, the excerpts and comments in the notebook begin to make sense. Those excerpts reflect Lenin's own views of the subject.

From the first volume of the three volume set of On War, Lenin copied extracts from the first two chapters of Book I, chapters 2, 3 and 6 of Book II and chapters 5 and 6 of Book III; in the second volume from chapters 2 and 4 of Book V and chapters 2, 3, 5, 6 and 9 of Book VI; and in the third volume, apart from a few extracts from Book VII, and the Principles of Instruction, most extracts are from Book VIII, chapters 2, 3, 6 and 9. These extracts indicated Lenin's interest in the relationship between war and politics, the changes in the character of war in different historical eras, the concept of moral greatness and the dialectical relationship of attack and defense.

Lenin considered the most important chapter to be the one titled "War Is An Instrument Of Politics" (chapter 6, Book VIII). In that chapter, Clausewitz defined war as a social phenomenon, an act of violence determined by a feeling of hostility accompanied by hostile intentions. War originates in the social conditions of states and their reciprocal social relationships. When Clausewitz remarked that war must be regarded as a part of politics, Lenin indicated his strong agreement in a marginal comment. He found additional emphasis of this theme in chapter 1 where he copied the whole of paragraph 24 which dealt with war as a continuation of policy by other means. These were ideas Lenin would find valuable in future years; the concept that war is not independent, but rather an instrument for the state which derived its particular features from its political nature. Extracts in the notebook from chapter 3 of Book II continued this theme by revealing that politics constituted the real meaning of war. Lenin noted similarities between Marxist thought and

the Clausewitzian definition of politics with its marked emphasis on economics.

Lenin would later write:

War is politics continued by other (i.e. forcible) means. This famous dictum belongs to one of the profoundest writers on military questions, Clausewitz. . . . Rightly the Marxists have always considered this axiom as the theoretical foundation for their understanding of the meaning of every war. It is from this very standpoint that Marx and Engels regarded wars. . . . Politics determines the social character, the historical significance of war—progressive or reactionary. . . . Politics guides both warfare proper, directing military strategy, and the nation's life as a whole, focusing all manpower and resources toward achieving victory. . . .

Clausewitz devoted an entire chapter (chapter 6 Book 3) to a discussion of boldness, which he described as the capacity to rise above the most menacing dangers. The need for boldness was not lost on Lenin—the Soviets credit him with a dialectical combination of the objective and the subjective in the process of analyzing military response.

Lenin also was interested in the relationship between attack and defense. He was drawn to chapter 6 (the means of defense) and chapter 8 (varieties of resistance). Lenin highlighted the contribution of people, the influence of politics, the strength of the offensive and the resources possessed by the defense relative to the strength of the offense. Lenin found in the attack-defense dialectic an argument adaptable to the revolutionary movement. The class struggle did not always involve the violence of a war and in future Leninist strategy any distinction between attack and defense disappeared when the battle began. Lenin adopted the Clausewitzian trait of common sense (retreat to restore the balance of strength; the decision to strike) and the need for judgment in applying principles of war. Lenin stressed art over science and viewed historical study as a necessity.

Lenin noted no disagreement with Clausewitz in his notebook. One must, however, presume that Lenin only transcribed those passages with which he

agreed. It is obvious that Lenin had an indepth appreciation of Clausewitz' contribution to military thought, but more specifically to social thought. Lenin understood Clausewitz and the philosophical and political basis of the arguments he put forth. Lenin searched through Clausewitz' work for general ideas which coincided with fundamental Marxian assumptions. Thus he copied and approved those passages which highlighted the role of socio-political conditions in the development of battles and their outcome. Lenin's interest in Clausewitz was an expression of his need to discover the relevance of war to his own revolutionary plans. The Marxist revolution was conceived and developed in a period of peace, but came into its own in a Europe threatened with total war. And, war had not really been precisely explained in Marxist theory although there were sweeping general interpretations. Marx and Engels believed war was influenced by other factors, creature forms of activity—war to them was an independent variable. Lenin eagerly accepted Clausewitz' virtual identification of a people's, popularly backed war, with what he called absolute war. Lenin willfully misinterpreted or extended Clausewitz' idea of a peoples war to make it a natural stepping stone to civil war and rebellion. Lenin was opposed to the simplistic Marxist view of war, which put Lenin at odds with Engels who wanted to prevent or contain a general European war.

Lenin justified his stand supporting World War I as an act of Marxist courage. He vocally accepted the teaching of Marx and Engels that every Capitalist war must be considered an opportunity for advancing the cause of socialism. While Marx assumed that the revolution must take place in a number of the most industrialized nations of Europe, Lenin always believed and promoted revolution in Russia. He was, however, convinced that Tsarism would fall only as the result of a long, global war. Thus, Lenin worried that World War I would end before it hastened the collapse of capitalism.

## Lenin's Writings

A review of Lenin's writings vividly depict the impact that Clausewitz had on Lenin. A few quotes are sufficient to illustrate this point:

War is the continuation, by forcible means, of the politics pursued by the ruling class of the belligerent powers, long before the outbreak of war. Peace is the continuation of the very same politics, with a registration of the changes brought about in the relation of forces of the antagonists as a result of military operations.<sup>2</sup>

Peaceful alliances prepare the grounds for wars and in their turn grow out of wars.<sup>3</sup>

Pacifists have never understood that war is the continuation of the politics of peace and peace is a continuation of the politics of war.<sup>4</sup>

From the proletarian viewpoint hegemony in war belongs to he who fights more energetically than all others, who makes use of every opportunity to attack the enemy.<sup>5</sup>

War is a political phenomenon and an 'armed social conflict'.<sup>6</sup>

National hate is in every war.<sup>7</sup>

Social-Democracy knows that wars are inevitable as long as society is divided into classes, as long as the exploitation of man by man exists. And in eliminating this exploitation, we will not be able to get by without wars which the oppressing classes begin.<sup>8</sup>

In any war, victory in the final account is determined by the spiritual state of those masses which shed their blood on the field of battle.<sup>9</sup>

Virtually all of the quotes Lenin derived from Clausewitz.

## The Marx-Lenin-Clausewitz Parallelism

Prior to beginning his study of Clausewitz, Lenin had already done extensive research into what he called imperialism. He read Clausewitz to bolster the conclusions previously drawn and to define the Bolshevik relationship to World War I. Up to that point Marxist theory had failed to explain fully the role of war and Lenin was searching to fill that void. Within these constraints,

it is not surprising that one can find Clausewitzian concepts echo throughout the Marxist-Leninist ideology.

The Political Report of the Central Committee to the Eighth All-Russian Conference of the R.C.P., dated 2 December 1919 said, "Civil war against the landlords and capitalists was the continuation of the politics of overthrowing the landlords and capitalists . . ."

All of Lenin's thoughts and actions were directed toward planning, achieving and consolidating the worldwide revolution of the proletariat. He attempted to cast the On War arguments into formulations that would assist in fostering the Bolshevik revolution. Lenin exploited Clausewitz' ideas on the alternating relationship between the attack and defense for the practical needs of the revolution. In February 1918 as German troops were advancing deep into Russia, Lenin expounded that in case one's own forces were obviously limited, the best expedient, rather than making a stand, would be to withdraw into the interior.

In Clausewitz, Lenin found the dialectical thinking expounded by Hegel. Clausewitz taught that struggle was inherent in existence, that the military aspects of war were subordinate to the political, and that the successful leader made thorough preparations, taking all relevant factors into account, while at the same time allowing for the element of unpredictability. Lenin reasoned that these axioms were applicable to all forms of struggle.

Clausewitz denied the class nature of politics and understood politics to be only foreign policy. He had in mind only the politics of the ruling class. Lenin said this failed to show that war was a continuation primarily of the domestic policy, which directly reflected societies class structure. Clausewitz, according to Lenin, did not recognize the presence of politics of the oppressed and the fact that politics was conditioned by economics. Lenin defined his political and military strategy based on the belief that Clausewitz' theory of war could be used in developing the Marxist theory of class struggle. He

based this on acknowledgment of the class based nature of the state and a definition of politics as the manifestation of the class struggle; war and politics are one and the same.

In Socialism and War, July-August 1915, Lenin wrote,

The Socialists have always condemned wars between people as barbarous and bestial. We understand the differences between wars on the one hand and class struggles inside of a country on the other. We fully recognize the necessity of civil wars, i.e, wars of an oppressed class against the oppressor. We Marxists differ from both pacifists and anarchists in that we recognize the necessity of an historical study of each war individually, from the point of view of Marx's dialectical materialism.

Likewise, in A Caricature of Marxism and Imperialist Economism, August-October 1916, he wrote,

How then, can the 'real nature' of a war be ascertained; how can it be determined? War is the continuation of politics. We must study the politics that preceded the war, the politics that led to and brought about the war. The philistine does not understand that war is a continuation of politics and therefore limits himself to saying 'the enemy is attacking', 'the enemy is invading my country', without trying to understand why, by which class, and for what political object the war is being conducted.

Thus, for the Soviets today, a clear distinction between peaceful coexistence and an unremitting struggle does not exist.

Clausewitz said that war was a social phenomenon, an act of violence determined by a feeling of hostility accompanied by hostile intentions. Lenin, on the other hand, said that politics determines the social character and the historical significance of war. Politics guides both warfare proper, by directing military strategy, and the nation's life as a whole, by focusing all manpower and resources toward achieving victory.

Lenin congratulated Clausewitz for criticizing people who tried to differentiate between war and peace and the offense and defense; these were not logical antitheses but were joined in dialectical union of opposites; thus in peace one prepared for combat. Lenin, who had a combat frame of reference

toward the world, quickly grasped the Clausewitzian theme that the chief military aim was not limited spatial objectives, but complete destruction of the enemy's army. That view became a permanent part of Soviet doctrine.

#### Soviet Thought Today

Despite the Soviet criticism of Clausewitz (for the beatification of Lenin) noted at the beginning of this paper, there is evidence that the Prussian General is receiving recognition in Russia. In Volume 4, pp. 202-3 of the Soviet Military Encyclopedia it is written that the ideas of Clausewitz were highly prized by V. I. Lenin. More often than not, however, obvious parallels between Soviet doctrine and Clausewitz go unacknowledged.

In the USSR today, war is defined as follows:

War is a continuation, by means of violence, of that policy which has been pursued long prior to the war by the ruling classes of the belligerent powers. Peace is a continuation of the same policy, with a write-in of those alterations in the relations between forces of the opponents which have been brought about by military operations.<sup>10</sup>

That acceptance of war as a tool of politics also determines the interrelation of military strategy and politics, which is based on the principle of the full dependence of the former on the latter in the Soviet system.

The Soviets believe that politics has available, in addition to war, a large arsenal of various nonviolent means which it can use for achieving its goals without resorting to war. That is supposedly a guideline used by the CPSU and the Soviet government in calling upon Western powers to solve all disputed international issues by negotiation, not war.

At the same time the Soviet leadership understands that the possibilities for attaining the most decisive political goals by use of armed conflict have grown immeasurably as the result of the rapid deployment of productive forces, science and technology. However, Sokolovsky in Military Strategy emphasized

that changing technology and armament did not invade the Leninist tenet that war is a continuation of politics. He asserted that military strategy must be subordinate to politics, because politics determines general and specific strategic aims, the general nature of state strategy, and the selection of the methods and forms of waging war. Furthermore, politics serves to bring about diplomatic, economic, morale, and political conditions favorable to the attainment of the objectives of war. Politics also serve to mobilize the maximum human and material resources commensurate with available means and forces in order to support military operations.

According to the Soviets, the importance of the formula of war as a continuation of politics rests in the fact that it creates the possibility of elucidating the specific political nature and political content of each distinct war. They view this fact as important strategy in that the political nature of each war determines the objectives and possibilities of strategy in the war and the foundations of its political direction. Theorists must consider not purely military factors, but also political and economic conditions and the nature and possibilities of the belligerents, since war, according to Lenin is a test of all the economic and organizational forces of each nation. War includes all aspects of all areas of construction and is waged simultaneously not only on the military, but also on the economic and political fronts.

The Soviets assert that the basic differences between the Marxist-Leninist understanding of war and that of Clausewitz is that Marxism added a materialistic content and that Marxist-Leninism embraces all facets of war as social-historical phenomena. Clausewitz, they say, considered war to be a continuation of merely foreign policy, while Lenin viewed foreign policy in inseparable unity with domestic policy. Here Lenin stressed that the determining role in this mutual relationship belonged to domestic politics.

According to Clausewitz, politics is an expression of a faceless "higher intellect of the state" while according to Lenin, it bears a fully definitive class character, serves the goals of the ruling class and is accomplished by this class in the interests of consolidating its position. Clausewitz' formula, the basis of which is an idealistic interpretation of politics, cannot, as viewed by the Soviets, serve as a methodological basis for defining the class essence of wars and their just or unjust character. Lenin indicated that war is just and progressive if it pursues liberating goals and unjust and reactionary if it is based on imperialistic goals of capturing foreign lands and enslaving other peoples. Lenin's definition is seen as materialistic, versatile, deeper and richer. Most important, it permits a full revelation of the class essence, character, causes and sources of any war. Lenin's definition is said to show that wars and armies owe their origin to the exploiting system. They appeared when society split into classes, and since that time have been used by exploiters as a means of asserting and consolidating their dominance. Clausewitz' reasoning, they claim, is aimed at hiding from the people the real essence of the aggressive, predatory wars of the exploiting classes and the liberating wars of the working class.

War, as defined by the Soviets, is armed violence, organized armed conflict between the various social classes, governments, groups of governments and nations in the name of achieving definite political goals. Soviet strategy calls for profound study of the nature, the preparation and conduct of war, the mastery of all forms of combat and for the ability to correctly evaluate a given situation and to apply existing forces and means in a timely manner to achieve the objectives of war. The Soviet concept of war expands the social content of war and, in the definition of the essence of war, the uncertain and immeasurable element represented by chance and probability has been eliminated to make the concept less metaphysical and more scientific. The Soviets have

gone beyond Clausewitz in that they consider violence to be the one basic essential element in war and thus acknowledge only the absolute form of war as an instrument of Soviet politics.

Soviet military doctrine proceeds from the point of view that a struggle is being waged in the world between two social systems, socialism and imperialism. The future war will be a coalition war with a sharp class character and resolute political and military objectives. Nuclear warhead missiles will constitute the decisive means of warfare. In the 1960's the Soviets believed nuclear war, while unthinkable, was virtually inevitable due to the nature of capitalism and that it would be a continuation of politics of classes and states by violent means. Lenin wrote that "war is a political phenomenon and an armed social conflict." Under conditions of nuclear war, the war would remain a social phenomenon, the continuation of politics by violent means. Politics will determine when the war begins and the means employed. Nuclear war will not emerge from nowhere without imperialist aggression. The social, class content of nuclear wars will be determined by politics. Lenin, in reviewing On War stressed the idea that "war seems to be more warlike, the more political it is. . . ." Today the Soviets believe conventional war is possible and preferable to nuclear war.

In his paper, The Consequences of World War III: The Soviet Perspective, Robert L. Arnett argues that the Soviet usage of the notion that "war is a continuation of politics" does not mean that they believe nuclear war can serve as a practical instrument of policy. Rather, they defend the Clausewitzian dictum because it is a fundamental element of Marxist-Leninist ideology and is used to explain their theory of the cause of war. Soviet spokesmen maintain the notion of victory is necessary in order to ensure the proper mental

outlook among civilian and military personnel. And, Marxist-Leninist ideology predicts a socialist victory in any war as inevitable.

While the Englishman Kingston-McCloughy and the German Rendulitsch claim that nuclear weapons have changed the relationship of war to politics, the Soviets argue that the essence of war doesn't change with changing technology and armament.

The Soviets specifically credit Lenin with formulating the following military principles: the determination of the chief danger and the direction of the main attack; the concentration of men and equipment at the decisive place at the decisive time; the mastery of all methods and means of warfare which the enemy might use; the decisive role of the offensive; the need to create reserves in war; the seizure and maintenance of the initiative; the boldness and decisiveness of operations; surprise in delivery of attacks; pursuit of the enemy right up until his total destruction. Clausewitz addressed all of these subjects and Lenin transcribed most into his notebook.

The emergence and development of Soviet military science is linked organically with Marxist-Leninist philosophy and the Soviets analyze key military problems with the help of that philosophy. The Soviets believe that the strength of their military science, and its superiority over bourgeois military science, derives from the fact that it is guided by Marxist-Leninist dialectical method and strives for the comprehensive study of the principles and conditions for securing victory.

It is likely that Shaposhnikov, a careful student of Clausewitz, introduced many of Clausewitz' ideas into Soviet doctrine. In the 1930's Molotov and Stalin attended the Frunze Academy where Shaposhnikov's lectures undoubtedly stressed Clausewitzian ideas.

Soviet doctrine is filled with polemics concerning patriotism, fighting spirit, morale, and national will. The doctrine bears close similarity to

Clausewitz' assertion that one had to consider "all the combatant's emotional forces and passions" and that the full weight of populations, their enthusiasms and hostile feelings sent war toward the absolute. It was obvious to Clausewitz that a conscript army did a better job if they were fighting for a cause, ("king, God, and country" in his time) in addition to wanting to get back home. Morale was directly related to victory. This philosophy fit nicely with Lenin's theory of the revolution and he made several annotations in his Clausewitz notebook. Thus Marxism-Leninism would assimilate mass participation in revolutionary warfare and create a proletarian military theory which fulfilled the prophecy of socialism replacing capitalism. In Soviet doctrine, ideology replaced Clausewitz' God as a cause to fight and the king became the Communist Party. Not surprisingly, country was not changed. Marxist-Leninist indoctrination of the military becomes the method to ensure the Soviet soldier has a cause. However, General Clausewitz is not given any credit for theorizing on the totality of war.

In every war, victory is conditioned in the final analysis by the spiritual state of those masses who shed their blood on the field of battle. Connection of the justice of the war, consciousness of the necessity to sacrifice their lives for the good of their brothers raises up the spirits of the soldiers and makes them endure unheard of burdens.<sup>11</sup>

Comprehension by the masses of the arms and the reasons of the war has an immense significance and guarantees victory.<sup>12</sup>

Taken directly from Clausewitz, Marxist-Leninism defines the morale factor as one of the decisive elements of any war, since victory, in the last analysis, depends on "the morale of the masses who shed their blood on the battlefield." High morale of the troops is impossible without the high political morale of the entire nation.

A basic tenet of Leninism is that national interests are supplanted by class interests. Also fundamental to Marxist-Leninists, but foreign to Clausewitz, is the idea that wars extend or represent the internal regimes of the states involved. When wars are waged by capitalist or imperialist states, they express the injustices inherent in those countries. Lenin never confused war with the class struggle—war being the violent phase of the class struggle.

In 1956 Khrushchev contradicted Lenin's inevitability of war thesis by saying that "War is not fatally inevitable." Nonetheless, Soviet polemics continue to assert that it is likely. To call it inevitable clashes with Soviet desire for peace. Thus there exists a war-peace continuum. The "capitalist peace" is nonpeaceful in nature and struggle is inherent. A struggle to the death with the capitalist-imperialist oppressors is the view of the world. Military doctrine is based on a military model of political relations derived from the Bolshevik conflict image of the world. Any distinction between peace and war is obliterated with the exception of the degree of armed force used. The Soviets claim they prefer to gain their objectives by peaceful means. Lenin had highlighted the statement of Clausewitz that said a conqueror is always a peace lover. Soviets do agree that achievement of the dictatorship of the proletariat includes the use of open political coercion but does not necessarily include armed conflict. Most also agree that armed conflict is not the same as war. According to Lenin, "In the absence of a political goal, even the most ferocious battle will not be a war but simply a struggle." Without political aims you can fight, but you can't have a war. War presupposes political aims and recourse to arms. In this arena the Soviets remain Clausewitzians.

Soviet military doctrine is determined by party policy. The structure of Soviet military thought begins with party positions on political strategy. Where party political strategy and military strategy leave off and military

doctrine begins is not clear because of the high political permeation of all spheres of Soviet activity. Military doctrine is the party's guide to the strategic structure and future direction of the military.

Soviet concepts of offense and defense and the relationship between them undoubtedly are taken from Clausewitz although for obvious ideological and psychological reasons, he receives little credit. The offensive character of Soviet strategy mirrors the nature of the revolutionary proletariat and an active Communist ideology. The Red Army is permeated with the aggressive ideology of the worker class. The superiority of the offense is due to the objective requirements of conduct of war. Soviet military doctrine and strategy are, first and foremost, offensive. Their objective in the event of war in Europe is to move in and occupy the subcontinent as rapidly and efficiently as possible, making maximum use of all political and military capabilities. Essential to the success of military operations is superiority over the enemy in firepower. Troops must be provided with nuclear and conventional weapons to permit destruction of all targets throughout the entire depth of the enemy's deployment. The Soviet goal in any war is victory and they believe to achieve victory, it is essential to occupy rather than destroy the territory, install governments that favor Communism and exploit available resources.

Soviets consider defense an expedient with which to repulse an attack by superior forces, inflict heavy losses, maintain positions, and thus create favorable conditions for passing rapidly to a counterattack. Clausewitz talked about repulsing, waiting and preserving when defining defense, emphasizing the extreme importance of waiting. Waiting is part of defense giving the attacker the initiative. However, defense also implies counterattack, defense only being successful when the blows are returned. Lenin agreed with Clausewitz who indicated defense should be taken as the point of departure,

not attack. Defense calls for attack to become a complete concept. Attack calls for defense.

Stalin commented specifically on Lenin's evaluation of Clausewitz indicating that Lenin did not leave a set of guiding theses on military questions. He said that Lenin did not broach the purely military questions. Stalin mentioned Lenin's interest in Clausewitz' ideas on the interrelationship between attack and retreat, defense and the counteroffensive and retreat under adverse conditions. Stalin indicated that Clausewitz had become obsolete as a military authority and that it would be ridiculous to study Clausewitz today. This example illustrates the process of Stalinism, the repudiation of any foreign influence on Soviet doctrine or achievement. To some extent, as in the first paragraph of this paper, that process has endured.

Chance does not occupy a normal role in Marxism-Leninism which presumes to predict the course of history. Strong Soviet stress on operational foresight and prediction denies the existence of chance occurrences. Clausewitz is criticized for admitting chance, luck and risk in war.

As pointed out by Colonel Harry G. Summers, Jr. in his book, On Strategy: The Vietnam War In Context, the Soviets understand the Clausewitzian principle of surprise.

First of all and primarily, it is necessary to know the enemy groupings of troops and weapons as well as his intentions and plans of action, quickly to evaluate the situation and find the enemy's most vulnerable point, to plan the battle in a short period of time, and then carry out a surprise attack where and when the enemy least expects it.<sup>13</sup>

#### Summary

While most of On War dealt with military subjects for the professional soldier, the extracts made by Lenin contained the political, social and economic views of Clausewitz. There was a discernable lack of interest in

purely military technique. The Clausewitzian political, social and economic views were not novel to Lenin as he had been applying them for years. Lenin's study of the Prussian General only reinforced his views. Clausewitz' concept of war helped Lenin clarify some of the most basic problems of the Bolshevik revolution. On the conviction that Clausewitz' theory of war could be used in developing the Marxist theory of class struggle, Lenin defined his political and military strategy. For Lenin, Clausewitz' thought provided a theoretical framework for legitimatizing an ideology.

Lenin incorporated Clausewitz into the Marxist ideology. Succeeding generations of Soviets were attracted to Clausewitz because of his understanding of war. Clausewitz as interpreted by Lenin remains the founding father of the Marxist-Leninist theory of war. Clausewitzian theories have become so mingled with Russian military science that the latter cannot be understood without the former.

Lenin's primary aim was the collapse of Tsardom in conditions of total social disintegration. The execution of that aim would lead to the Soviet Union becoming one of the two superpowers of the 20th century.

ENDNOTES

1. V. I. Lenin, Selected Works, Volume V, p. 179.
2. V. I. Lenin, "The Peace Programme," Satsial Demokrat, No. 52, 25 March 1916.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. General-Major A. S. Milovidov and Colonel V. G. Kozlor, Editors, The Philosophical Heritage of V. I. Lenin and Problems of Contemporary War (A Soviet View), translated and published under the auspices of the United States Air Force, 1972, p. 103.
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