

Ian Greig, *They Mean What They Say*
Foreign Affairs Research Institute
London, 1981

Soviet statements and Soviet actions constantly confuse and surprise the West. The first seem too frank, too extreme to be taken seriously. Surely, we argue, they are merely ideological expressions intended to rally the faithful and deceive the bourgeoisie. So we take the easy option and ignore the statements. The second, the actions, then bowl us over. "Who would have thought . . . how utterly underhand . . . completely out of character . . ." Since we cannot ignore facts, we try to explain them away. The Soviets were driven to act out of fear of encirclement, or the doves in the Kremlin, lacking support from the West, were unable to restrain the hawks. Anything, it would seem, is preferable to the painful truth: the statements are for the most part sincere expressions of policy, and if we have the courage to recognize this we will not be surprised by the actions. Indeed, with foresight and skill, we may be able to deter or prevent the worst consequences.

Ian Greig is an experienced analyst of Soviet revolutionary methodology. Of his many publications, this reviewer would pick his *Subversion, Agitation and the Spread of People's War* (1973) as a minor classic. In this new book, he has gathered together under four main headings a wealth of policy statements by Soviet leaders, ideologues, spokesmen, generals, admirals and diplomats. Beginning with Lenin's views on foreign policy and related topics, we move to General Principles of Soviet Foreign Policy, Soviet Military Doctrine, and Soviet policy on selected current issues. There are biographical notes on principal individuals quoted and special Soviet sources are listed.

This book is not for relaxed, bed-time reading. It is hard, sometimes depressing work. On the one hand, the Orwellian doubletalk in which all Soviet statements are made is tedious in the extreme; on the other, the natural desire of the cosy Western reader is to evade tough, challenging, unpleasant facts. Yet the book is not just recommended, it is advised as absolutely essential reading. Unavailable in book stores, it can be ordered direct from the Foreign Affairs Research Institute, Arrow House, 27-31 Whitehall, London, SW1A 2BX for £5 or \$US10.

Here is one excerpt, quoted from *Izvestia*, 11 September 1973:

"War can and must be banned as a means of resolving international disputes. But we must not 'ban' civil or national liberation wars. We must not 'ban' uprisings and we by no means 'ban' revolutionary mass movements aimed at changing the political and social status quo."

which is where we came in, in the Editorial to this issue.

M.T.