

# Soviets officially rehabilitate Stalin

by Luba George

On May 9, the day that Russia completed the celebration of the victory over Nazi Germany, Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachov completed the full rehabilitation of Josef Stalin. This followed months during which Soviet television and cinemas crammed their schedules full of films and programs hailing the "Red Czar," Stalin, the cruel and scheming dictator who brought Russia from a peripheral European power to a thermonuclear superpower, and a giant step toward the ultimate Russian imperial goal of ruling the Eurasian landmass, and achieving global hegemony.

At the six-hour-long VE-Day ceremony at the Kremlin on May 8, before an audience that included the top political and military leadership of the Russian Empire, plus the crème de la crème of World War II combat and partisan veterans, Gorbachov declared:

"The gigantic work at the front and in the rear was guided by the party, its central committee, and the State Defense Committee headed by the general-secretary of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party, Josef Vissarionovich Stalin."

The response to the mere mention of Stalin was electric: Sustained and unstoppable applause. It was unquestionably the psychological highpoint of the May 8-9 festivities.

Gorbachov also echoed Stalin's wartime appeal to the old religious roots of Mother Russia, in one startling phrase: "The mortal danger overhanging the homeland and a tremendous force of patriotism raised the entire country to a people's war—to a holy war."

Together with the threats issued against the United States and West Germany by Gorbachov in his speech, and the display of old and new military hardware in the parade through Red Square—symbolizing victory not only in the last war, but in "the next war"—the image of an empire preparing for the final surge toward global domination, was unmistakable.

## Attacks on the United States

The praise of Stalin was accompanied by the most scurrilous rhetoric ever from the young Stalinist. Gorbachov accused President Reagan of being the "new Hitler."

"Some politicians are ready to forget and even justify the SS cut-throats and, more than that, even to pay tribute to them," he said.

This attack on President Reagan's recent visit to Bitburg Cemetery in West Germany was accompanied by other tough attacks on the West for collusion with Hitler. It was "massive political sclerosis," warned Gorbachov, not to remember that "Western capitalists had armed the Nazis and directed them to the East." He denounced the United States as the "imperialist heir to Munich . . . at the forward edge of the war menace to mankind. The policy of the United States is growing more bellicose in character and has become a constant negative factor of international relations, a factor we cannot ignore." America, said Gorbachov, "is actively reviving nationalism and revanchism in West Germany."

Gorbachov also emphasized the "superiority" of the socialist system of economy, bragging that: "The Soviet Union is a powerful and flourishing power. . . . In the last 40 years, our industries have advanced twice as fast as in the capitalist countries. . . . It was the Soviet Union that built the first atomic plant in the world . . . the first nuclear-powered icebreaker . . . and was the first to launch the Sputnik into outer space. Our astronaut, Yuri Gagarin, was the first person to see the Earth from outer space."

## The parade

The Soviet VE-Day celebrations culminated on May 9 in a massive Red Square military parade. The parade was the biggest in Moscow for many years, and was designed to carry a clear message. It was divided into two parts for maximum psychological impact upon the Russian population. The first part consisted of the weapons that won the Great Patriotic War, as the Russians call the Second World War—T-34 tanks and "Katyusha" multiple rocket launchers ("Stalin organs" was the nickname given them by the German Army).

The parade closed with a sampling of the weapons which are intended to "win the next war." It featured the first display of the new generation of Soviet short- and medium-range missiles—the SS-21, now deployed in East Germany and Czechoslovakia. Given its 120-kilometer range, the weapon is only useable against targets—cruise and Pershing bases—in West Germany. Therefore, the decision to display it in the parade marked a deliberate threat to West Germany.

Defense Minister Marshal Sergei Sokolov, speaking at the parade, referred to the Nazis as the "crack forces of imperialism." He declared that Russia, during the last war, "made the decisive contribution . . . to saving world civilization." He repeated Gorbachov's chauvinistic claim that the 1945 victory had been a victory of the "superiority" of Soviet ideology as well as Soviet military might.

He warned: "The Soviet Union firmly states that retribution will be inevitable for anyone who will encroach on the peaceful work of the Soviet people, on the security of the Soviet Union and its allies. Our glorious armed forces have everything necessary for this."