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Trust and Distrust in the USSR

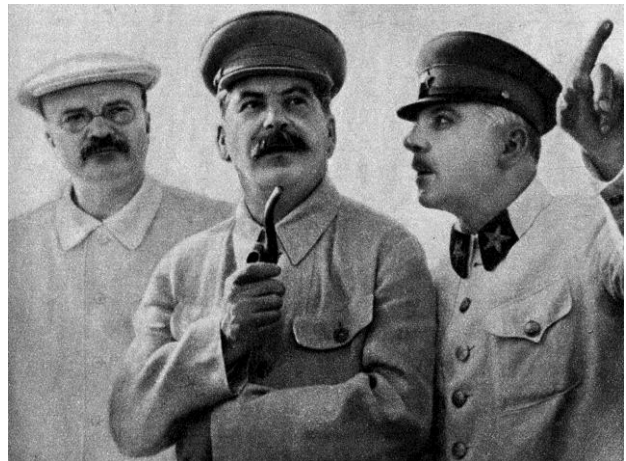
edited by Geoffrey Hosking

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The destructive intensity of the 1930s Terror in Soviet Russia is usually explained in terms of the Communist Party's political monopoly, Stalin's drive to absolute power and the chaos generated by rapid social and political change, but there was another vital factor: the wildfire spread of generalized social distrust. Dilemmas of trust and distrust became the main preoccupation of most Soviet citizens during the 1930s and '40s, fostered and exploited by the institutions of Stalin's regime.

Whilst these dilemmas eased in later decades, they left a permanent mark on the Soviet landscape. They help to explain the collapse of the Soviet Union, and are still evident in Russia today.

The five articles in this volume explore the ways in which the Russian people responded to, negotiated with and manipulated notions and structures of trust during and after the Stalinist era.



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