‘Socialism in one country’

Stalin’s Five Year Plans for industry & agriculture

Collectivisation
Joseph Stalin 1879 - 1953

• Ruled as undisputed leader from 1928 to 1953.

• Stalinism:
  • Method of rule, or policies, of Joseph Stalin.
  • Associated with a regime of terror and totalitarian rule.
  • ‘Socialism in one country’
  • State must become stronger before it can be eliminated

• Wanted to transform USSR from backward agri country to modern industrial one.
  • Rationale based on combination of econ & pol factors linked to fear of foreign invasion.
  • Believed if USSR to compete with industr. nations = state intervention.
Key terms, people & events of the Stalinist era

- Collective
- Planned economy
- Five-Year Plans
- Gosplan
- Propaganda
- Stakhanovites
- Kolkhoz
- Sovkhoz
- Socialism
- Famine
- Terror
- Labour Camps
- Gulags
- Censorship
- Ideas
- Sergei Kirov
- Censorship
- Kulaks
- Dekulakisation
- NKVD
- Terror
- OSU
- Purges
- Marshall Tukhachevsky
- Rykov
- Yagoda
- Bukharin
- Lev Kamenev
- Grigori Zinoviev
- Sergei Kirov
- Censorship
- Kulaks
- Dekulakisation
- NKVD
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- Gulags
- Purges
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‘Socialism in one country’

• 1928 – Stalin = undisputed leader – put his policy of ‘Socialism in one country’ into practice.
  • Aim = transform Soviet society from backward, agricultural society into major industrial power.
    • To be carried out in series of five year plans.
  • See Source 18.1 – Stalin outlines objectives & justifications for his policy.

• 3 main reasons for developing industry quickly
  1. To provide machinery, esp. tractors, needed to mechanise farming & produce more food.
  2. Catch up with Western world & make Russia less dependent on West for indust. goods.
  3. Have a strong industry capable of prod. armaments re: defence.

• To develop industry, also nec. to devel. ag.
• Stalin’s econ policies aimed to modernize the Soviet Union.
• Method by which these were to be implemented = industrialization & collectivization of agriculture.
  • Industrialisation = building up industry, esp. heavy industry.
  • Collectivisation = eliminating private ownership & holdings & putting agriculture on a large scale using modern techniques & equip.
  • Collectivisation also = means to address socialization objective.
  • Ess. ag increased to allow Soviet Union to earn export currency to pay for infrastructure re: industry as Stalin knew West would not loan USSR money or provide investment:
    • Funds needed to build factories, mines, power stations, dams, improve transportation & pay for imported machinery & foreign technical advisers & engineers.
• Gosplan – the State Planning Commission est. by Lenin 1921 – set the targets & quotes for industry & agriculture.
From Stalin’s collected works, 1931

We must...create in our country an industry which would be capable of re-equipping and organising not only the whole of our industry but also our transport and our agriculture...The history of Russia shows...that because of her backwardness she was constantly being defeated...We are 50 or 100 years behind the advanced countries. We must make good this lag in ten years. Either we do it or we will go under.
The Five-Year Plans

• Set prod. targets which industry had to reach.

Production figures for 1927 (before the first Five-Year Plan), and for the first two Five-Year Plans, in millions of tons. Prod. targets are shown in brackets.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>1927</th>
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<th>1937</th>
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<td>15 (16)</td>
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<td>Steel</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6 (10)</td>
<td>18 (17)</td>
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The Five Year Plans

• Speed of industrialization & implementation of Stalin’s policies met with criticism.
  • Stalin blamed bureaucracy – ‘dizzy with success’.

• However, he also struck at any internal enemies or ‘saboteurs’ not keeping pace with his industrialization program.
  • 1928 – first of the ‘show trials’ – the Shakhty trial

• Three Five Year Plans in all.
  • First 1928-32
  • Second 1932-37
  • Third 1938 (interrupted by WW2).

• High targets were set, workers encouraged to reach these levels.
  • Incentives inc. wage differentiation to encourage growth in productivity of labour.
  • The stick – increased severity of the law re: absenteeism, alcoholism, work books etc.
The results of the Five Year Plans

- See source 18.3, 18.4, 18.5.1, 18.5.2, 18.5.3, 18.6
Stakhanovites & Propaganda

• Achievements of ‘super worker’ Alexei Stakhanov promoted to encourage workers to increase their output and to earn extra privileges.

• Huge propaganda campaign mounted to encourage people (radio, newspapers, awards, honours, etc.)

• Many ‘shamed’ into raising prod. levels rather than ‘inspired’.
Collectivisation

- May 1929 – new Five-Year Plan for ag. announced 5 mill. households to be put into collective farms by 1932-33.
- Households organised into collective farms, state to provide much of machinery.
- Stalin decided there would be two main types of collective farms
  - Sovkhoz – land owned by state & workers merely = a hired labour force & paid a regular wage. All produce taken by state.
  - Kolkhoz (collective farm in Russian) – preferred by Communists.
    - Normally = approx. 80 or so peasant families.
    - Had to provide a fixed amount of food for state at low prices.
    - Peasants received a small wage & could keep surplus.
    - Peasants had to hand over their animals & tools to the collective farm, which would be run by a committee.
    - Idea = peasants work together & share everything, including what farm produced. In return, state provided ag. machinery & help peasants to farm more efficiently.
- Terror, arrest, execution & deportation used to force some 25 million non-kulak families into collective farms.
  - Oct 1929 – 2 million collectivized households
  - Jan 1930 – 5 million
  - March 1930 – 15 million (60% - peak).
Dekulakisation

- Stalinist view = NEP had produced a class of capitalist or kulak farmers.
- Under Stalin, NEP no longer existed & success of Five Year Plans relied on collective rather than individual ownership.
- Agricultural expansion essential to industrial growth, therefore...
  - Collectivisation = the goal
  - Elimination / liquidation of the kulaks also significant aspect of collectivization.
  - Dec 1929 – Stalin announced ‘kulaks’ banned from working on collective farms & ‘eliminated as a class’
  - >320,000 households victims of dekulakization by mid-1930.
- See Sources 18.9.1, 18.9.2, 18.10
Peasant reaction

• Change = problematic as peasants conservative & resistant to change.
• Initial reaction to collectivization = passive resistance.
• To break this opp. authorities used force, deportations & executions.
• Peasants responded by destroying their livestock.
• Peasants were not silent.
• Red Army used to suppress rebels

• See Source 18.12.1, 18.12.2
Famine in the Ukraine

• Created by Stalin’s iron will to destroy kulak class & implement collectivisation.
• 1930 – Stalin had been successful in gaining an increased grain export quota for USSR on world market therefore he was determined to fill export quotas.
  • Stalin deliberately starved his own people to achieve his own econ. goals.
• Bet. 8 – 12 million lives lost.
• See Source 18.11
The impact of Collectivisation

- See Source 18.13
The victory of Communism / The results of the Five-Year Plans & Collectivisation

• Despite exaggerated Communist propaganda, achievements of Five Year Plans were actually remarkable.
  • Did not meet all targets, however...
  • Russian industrial output 1928 to 1940 grew 700% which made Soviet Union among world’s leading industrial powers.
  • Collectivisation less successful, however, Stalin had completed the victory of Communism in Russia.
• 1929 – 1937 – investment in edu & training = skilled workforce.
• Opportunities for women.
• Collectivisation fitted in with Comm ideals + gave Stalin control over countryside & peasantry

• ‘Victory’ won at great cost
  • Millions died in famine in Ukraine
  • Many more died working Siberia (White Sea Canal project) & in Moscow (the underground.
  • Fate of the kulaks = labour camp or death.
  • New elite emerged + officials – received better pay & conditions.
      • Went against Communist principals, however, Stalin realized incentives necessary.
  • Econ progress often achieved at expense of working & living conditions.
Were Stalin’s economic policies a success?

• Economically & politically – success in the long-term
  • Collectivisation & Five-Year Plans brought USSR into 20th C.
  • Econ able to withstand German invasion 1941 & four years of war.
  • Stalin secured control of industry & agri
  • ‘Socialism in one country’ firmly est. in urban & rural areas.

• Socially?
  • Harsh living & working conditions in towns.
  • Wholesale use of slave labour, famine & elimination of a class of people.
  • Chaos

• Did the end justify the means?