

The Impact of Stalin's Rule

Economic Impact

- Create a modern industrial country
- Make agriculture more efficient and productive

1. Collectivisation

- Stalin's plans for setting up large state-run farms called kolkhozes.
- Seen as a way to create a more communist society based on modern towns and cities.
- Private land ownership would also be removed from rich farm owners.
- Cities and towns would grow in size and quantity, creating a worker paradise.

Aims

1. Move more peasants to move to cities and towns to become workers; this would provide more workers for industrialisation.
2. Be more in line with the Party's motto of 'Peace, Land and Bread', rather than private land ownership.
3. Aid Stalin's main aim of rapid industrialisation
4. Promise a secure food supply for the factory workers
5. Export crops to other countries to raise funds for industrialisation.
6. Make farming more efficient and allow farmers to become factory workers.

Methods

Forced collectivisation

1. Collectivisation first began on a voluntary basis for peasants in 1927, but by 1929 forced collectivisation was enforced.
2. By 1929, collectivisation was still unpopular as it meant that they might earn less income as they are getting fixed wages.
3. The state will own the land and distribute the crops.
4. Quantities of crops the farmers are to produce; working hours; wages are fixed by the state.
5. The state will provide equipment such as tractors for the farmers to work with.
6. Farmers who produce low quantities or are absent from work were punished.
7. Shock workers, who were made to be model urban workers and farmers were used to force peasants to join collective farms and remove kulaks.
8. When forced collectivisation was enforced, people were forced to give up their land and those who resisted were killed, forced to migrate to other parts of Russia or sent to gulags.

Class war against the Kulaks

1. Stalin declared that those who resisted collectivisation were enemies of the state and capitalists.
2. 'Kulak' was vaguely defined as a wealthy peasant, but anyone who resisted collectivisation was known as a kulak.
3. Declaring a class war against the Kulaks divided the peasant classes and made the poorer peasants turn on their richer neighbours.
4. There were even quotas for kulaks to reach at the district level, and this enabled larger farms of peasants to be confiscated and run as collectives by the local communist party.

Results

State control of farming

1. By 1940, almost all farms were collectivised and some used new farming methods.
2. This system gave USSR complete control over the peasants who made up more than half of the population of the USSR.

The Great Famine

1. Collectivisation, however, led to widespread famine in the rural area in 1932 and 1933 especially in grain-rich areas like Ukraine.
2. It resulted in more than 4 million deaths.
3. Occurred because;
 - o Peasants killed their own livestock and burnt or hid their crops just to prevent them from being taken away by the state between 1927-1929.
 - o The NKVD, party officials and volunteers however, continued to confiscate all the crops they could find and took over the fields, livestock, farming tools and buildings. This led to bad-harvest in 1932 to 1933.

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- o Grain was distributed to cities and towns to feed workers and some of these grains were exported to other countries to earn hard currency to buy industrial equipment.
- o Grain failure was also caused by overconfidence in technology, and 17 million horses used to till plough the field were killed to ensure that farmers used tractors, however, shortages in tractors and farming equipment led to crop failure.

Continued food shortages in grain production and livestock

1. Collectivisation failed to increase grain production. Between 1928 and 1934, grain production fell by 5 million tonnes. Livestock like cattle, pigs, sheep and goats fell by more than 50%.
2. Grain production was low because there was no incentive to increase productivity and harvests were still sold to the state at fixed prices.
3. Tractors also frequently broke down and did not lead to any increase in grain harvests; peasants were forced to pay tax to the machine tractor stations (MTS) and tractors were kept and shared by several kolkhozes which made farming inefficient.
4. Food shortages remained a constant problem for the USSR right up to the 1960s.

2. Industrialisation

- The USSR was weak industrially which relied on agriculture.
- Almost all the industries were concentrated in only a few cities and Stalin wanted to create more cities and industries in other parts of USSR.
- WW1 and RCW had devastated the USSR, and farmland was ruined, millions died and had brought famine in 1921 and he had to rebuild the SE
- Industrialisation helped to strengthen Stalin's political authority by making a success of his economic policies
- By making USSR catch up with the western countries, Stalin believed that the surrounding capitalist countries won't try and come attack USSR

Methods

1. Industrialisation / Five-Year Plans

1. Stalin developed FYPs between 1928 and 1938 to centralise the economy and achieve industrialisation.
 2. Factory managers and workers were to work towards achieving those specific targets or face harsh disciplinary measures.
- A. *First FYP (1928-1932)*
1. Focused on improving heavy industry: coal, iron, steel and electricity.
 2. The weakness was the lack of Soviet infrastructure, especially roads, railways and canals to increase industrialisation.
 3. The targets were high and unrealistic. Despite this, massive gains were made: coal and iron doubled their output and electric power trebled. 1500 new industrial plants were built, alongside 100 new towns.

B. Second FYP (1933-1937)

1. Continued to focus on heavy industry (the successes of the 1st FYP) upon building, with emphasis placed on improving soviet transportation and communication networks.
2. The Trans-Siberian railway was expanded and new canals, such as the Moscow-Volga, were constructed.
3. Communications were improved under his plan and railway links between cities and industrial centres were improved.
4. Industrial focused on chemicals and metallurgy grew rapidly under this plan.

*(Metallurgy: branch of science concerned with the properties of metal and their production and purification)

C. Third FYP (1937-1940)

1. Concentrated on consumer goods etc radios, bicycles and household goods for the people of USSR. However, the plan had to be changed when the USSR was attacked by Nazi Germany in 1941.
2. When the Nazi Germany attacked, the focus was turned to producing armaments (tanks, planes and weapons)
3. This plan was not completed as Russia entered the war against Germany in June 1941.

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2. Use of shock brigades, skilled workers and gulag labour

1. Shock brigades were formed from keen and young communist party members who were motivated by communist ideas and travel barren areas to set up new towns and industrials.
2. Engineers and skilled workers from the western region helped to set up industrial projects, were workers were trained by more skilled workers. By the 1930s, the setting up of technical institutes and universities produced enough engineers and technicians to help industrialise the USSR.
3. Slave labour from gulags was also used to build large public work projects.
4. Peasants were forced to migrate to various cities to work as unskilled labour, and there were nearly 12 million of such workers between 1928 and 1938.

2. Control of workers through a system of rewards and punishment

1. The communist state-controlled workers through a system of rewards and punishment.
2. These workers committees gave out ration cards, paid workers and allocated housing. Rewards were given to workers who met their targets in the form of extra rations.
3. Those who did not meet targets were punished by giving fines, having their rations cut or being sent to the gulags.
4. In the 1930s, a system of rewards based on giving better pay, public praise and publicity was put in place to get workers to be more productive.

3. Propaganda: The Stakhanovite Movement

1. Propaganda was introduced to encourage workers to be more productive.
2. In 1935, the SM was started as worker propaganda to encourage workers to perform feats of great productivity through better organisation and hard work.
3. Workers were encouraged to model themselves after the hard work of Alexei Stakhanov, who had dug 102 tons of coal in 6-hours. However, the public were not told that he had 2 co-workers and modern tools to help him achieve those targets.

Impacts

1. Industrialisation of USSR

1. Every year the amount of steel, coal, iron and oil produced in the USSR rose higher and new factories were opened, especially in eastern USSR; more railways were built to transport the goods produced.
2. By 1940, USSR was a modernised and industrialised state and when Germany invaded in 1942, USSR could produce tanks, planes and weapons to fight off Germany.

Industry	Level of increase	1927	1929
Coal	Almost 4 times	35 million tonnes	150 million tonnes
Steel production	4.5 times	4 million tonnes	18 million tonnes
Oil	Almost 2 times	12 billion tonnes	26 million tonnes
Electricity	18 times	5 billion kilowatts	90 billion kilowatts

2. Poor Quality Goods, Wastage and inefficiency

1. Many of the goods produced in the USSR were of poor quality and simple designs as emphasis was placed on achieving high targets and not producing quality goods and many workers were peasants who lacked skills, education and experience to operate machines to produce goods (E.g. in the first FYP, only 50,000/170,000 tractors were produced and more than 50% broke down within a year.)
2. New factories were built in basic styles and there was a lack of proper equipment, machinery and materials.
3. One example of wastage and inefficiency came from the lack of raw materials and machine parts to increase industrialisation: the Stalingrad Tractor Factory was only able to produce 43 out of its targeted 500 tractors in 1930 due to a shortage of machine parts.

3. Workers suffered harsh labour discipline

1. Strict regulations were imposed on workers in 1931 to get workers to be more efficient.
2. These include:
 - i. prison sentences for being late for work/damaging work equipment
 - ii. workbooks were issued to workers to record their productivity
 - iii. death penalty was given for theft of state property
 - iv. absence from work could result in serious disciplinary measures
 - v. workers needed to have passports to travel within the USSR to discourage workers from leaving their jobs and searching for higher paid jobs in other cities.

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Political Impact

- Stalin's aim was to tighten his control on the Communist Party and get rid of all the potential threats to his power.
- His aim was to create a centralised state based on personal loyalty to him.
- The features of Stalin's political reforms were the purges carried out between 1934 and 1938 and the use of propaganda.

Impacts

1. Led to a purge of millions of Soviet citizens who were seen as a threat to Stalin's power. This period was called the Great Terror and lasted from 1934-1938.

a. Murder of Kirov and Show Trials & Purges

- In Dec 1934, the Leningrad Party leader, Sergei Kirov, was murdered. Stalin used his murder as an excuse to 'purge' and clear out his opponents in the Communist Party.
- Within a few weeks of his murder, Stalin purged out thousands of people who were accused of being Trotsky's supporters, and they included Leningrad - Kirov's powerbase.
- Using show trials, old Bolsheviks like Zinoviev, Kamenev, Bukharin and Rykov were accused of being traitors to the state and plotting the murder of Kirov and others.
- Torture, threats and blackmail were used to get the accused to confess to their sins to their crimes and to implicate others. Then, a public trial will be held to formally charge them in court with a verdict already decided.

Trial of the Sixteen (December 1935)

- Kamenev and Zinoviev signed confessions on conditions that their families and followers will not be harmed. However, Kamenev's wife and elder son as well as Zinoviev's son were still arrested and shot.

Trial of the Twenty-One (March 1935)

- Bukharin and others were determined to not confess their alleged crimes.
- However, threats were made to Bukharin's wife and nine-month old son to get confessions. His wife was sent to the gulag and her son, the orphanage.
- Stalin was also suspicious of the Red Army as they have been loyal to Trotsky previously. Stalin needed an army that is loyal to him alone and hence tens of thousands of Red Army officers as well as high-ranking officials were accused of treason and were tortured and shot.
- Nikolai Yezhov, whom Stalin put in charge of the secret police to carry out the purges, was himself arrested in 1938 and executed in 1940.
- In their place, Stalin promoted younger and more inexperienced members of the party who owed their advancement and allegiance to Stalin alone. Hence, he would be assured of the loyalty of the army.

2. Loss of freedom: Fear and suspicion

- The NKVD or secret police were given wide-ranging powers and they can arrest, torture and execute anyone without trial.
- People were encouraged to inform on their fellow workers, neighbours or family members, and this created a climate of fear and suspicion in Soviet society.
- Many freedoms were lost. Anyone living the country without permission automatically receives death penalty and all of their relatives will be arrested as well. All penalties apply to children aged 12 and above too.

3. Loss of talented individuals to serve the USSR

- The USSR lost many talented individuals due to the purges. This led to administrative inefficiency in party, trade unions and local governments.
- The killing of more than half of the officer corps left Soviet military weakened in the 1930s, and this led to the Soviet military defeat when Germany invaded in 1941.

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	<p>4. Propaganda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stalin used propaganda to build up his own profile as the legitimate successor to Lenin. He claimed to be a father to his people and carefully policed how he was represented. For example, he made sure that he was wearing ordinary clothes and retaining the modest title of Secretary-General. Pictures and propaganda posters of Stalin were posted everywhere, and all offices, factories and classrooms were required to have a picture of Stalin. All the achievements and success of the Soviet Union were credited to Stalin's leadership. Large portions of the Soviet history were also rewritten to boost Stalin's status and discredit his rivals as disloyal counter-revolutionaries. Photographs were doctored to remove unwanted people e.g. editing Trotsky out of photos of Lenin leading the revolution. Those whom Stalin deemed a threat to his rule were also edited out, e.g. Yezhov. These measures boosted his authority and status, and also made opposition against him even more impossible.
<p><u>Social Impact</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve standards of living and modernise the USSR Create a new Soviet citizen who was modernised, socialist, educated and cultured. Create a communist totalitarian state: this meant controlling and managing human activity to create the aims of the state <p>Impact of Stalin's social reforms</p>	
<p>Impacts (people)</p>	<p>1. Living in Fear</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The secret police had informers everywhere, and the slightest indication of anti-Stalinism could warrant an arrest, and people knew they were being watched and judged. When people are judged poorly, they will have difficulty applying for housing, jobs or holidays. If they stood out for the wrong reasons, they may fall victim to the secret police and be sent to forced labour camps or even killed. During the period of the purges, the NKVD had the power to arrest anyone without trial, and people were also encouraged to inform on their fellow workers, neighbours or even family as enemies of the state. <p>2. State Control of Society</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Under Stalin, all private enterprises were banned. Only the government was allowed to distribute items. <p>3. Shortages in consumer goods and food</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The first 2 FYPs concentrated on agricultural and industrial targets but neglected the production of consumer goods. Stalin did not care for the welfare of his workers but was driven by targets. The Great Famine (1932-1933) had caused food shortages and food rationing was used to distribute food. The food shortages affected the rural countryside worse than the cities. People had to queue from early morning to get bread; meat, veggies and fruits were hardly available. Luxuries such as clothing were not available. Though the third FYP concentrated on consumer goods, the plan was disrupted due to WWII that began in September 1939. <p>4. Fall in standard of living</p> <p>a. Shortage of houses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There was already a serious shortage of housing as population had drastically increased by more than 30 million b/t 1926 and 1939. From 1930 to 1940, the space of the houses decreased from 5.5 square feet to 4.0. Local communist political parties controlled housing and sometimes moved new families into middle-class families' homes. As private ownership was banned, houses could also be turned into communal apartments and families could also be moved out when they're taking up too much space. In larger houses, people lived along corridors and under staircases and all kitchens and bathrooms were shared facilities in the house. Unmarried workers and students lived in overcrowded barracks. Many homes lacked proper sanitation and electricity.

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	<p>b. Workers were also pushed very hard to achieve the targets of the FYPs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This meant that they had to work long hours under harsh working conditions. • They were overworked and underpaid. <p>5. Famine</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The state also controlled the use of agricultural products from collective farms. • The state owned the farms and hence the farmers are not allowed to keep the produce for themselves, and all produce were collected by the government. • Even after attempts of hiding their produce, Party officials continued to forcibly take away the produce. • During the Great Famine in 1932, the state did not distribute its stockpile grain but sold it overseas for funds for more industrial machinery and development. • The famine continued until 1934, and close to 7 million peasants died of starvation.
Impacts (Various social groups)	<p>1. Minority nationalities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the 1920s, the government encouraged awareness of national cultures, local languages and promoted non-Russians to important positions. This was to promote communism as an international movement. • However, in the 1930s, purges were carried out against various nationalities because they opposed collectivization and many of them were from Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Northern Caucasus. • Purges took form of purging the local communist party and placing them under direct control from Moscow. It also included mass arrest and deportations of hundreds of thousands of people from their native towns and villages to prisons. • Stalin envisioned all people in Soviet Union to be working towards the same goal of collectivisation and industrialisation and hence these policies were felt in minority republics like how Soviet Russia did. <p>2. Role of women in society</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woman's role was improved - they were given equal rights in Soviet constitution, and abortion, divorce were also legalised for them to have more controls over their own lives. • Due to the deaths of men due to collectivisation, famine and purges, millions of women became the breadwinners for the family and worked in Soviet industries. E.g. in the 1930s, more than 10 million women worked on projects such as construction, lumbering and machine building and others even worked in the army. By 1940, almost 2/3 of workers who worked in light industries were women. • Soviet policy in the mid-1930s was to encourage women to both work and have more children. Abortion was made illegal except in cases when the mother's life is in danger and various subsidies were given to encourage childbirth. Day-care centres and nurseries were built to encourage childbirth and for women to work. <p>3. Education: compulsory schooling and increased literacy rates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communists prized education, and under Lenin and Stalin's rule, the greatest advancement of Soviet Union was the increase in literacy rates. Before the revolution, only 40% of males b/t ages 9-40 were able to read but by 1939, this had risen to 94% and the percentage of women rose from 13% to 65%. • School attendance was compulsory, and every child was entitled to at least 9 years of free education. The education was loaded with propaganda with emphasised communism and atheism. • Technical subjects such as mathematics, engineering and science was emphasised in schools as they contribute to the industrialisation of the USSR. • Young children aged 10-15 joined the Young Pioneers and were sent out to work on political campaigns in industrialised towns and collectivised farms. • Teenagers were encouraged to join the Komsomol (Communist Union of Youth), which emphasised political education and outdoor activities. • They were encouraged to join these activities to be indoctrinated and be loyal to Stalin.

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4. Control of mass media, art and culture

- All mass media were tightly controlled by the state.
- Socialist realism was encouraged as a form of Soviet art. This is a style of realistic art that had socialism and communism as its main focus. It focused on themes that glorified the working classes and their struggle for freedom. They are meant to transform and appeal to workers and inspire them towards socialism.
- Sculptors were only allowed to produce images of Lenin, Stalin and state-sanctioned heroes.
- Over 300 soviet films were produced between 1933 and 1940 - Stalin even commented on the film scripts to make sure that they portray the USSR the right way.
- Everything was published and produced to portray the Communist Party in a positive light and support Stalinist ideas.
- There was close monitoring and tight censorship of mass media. Anyone who did not produce the right kind of 'socialist realms' were at risk of being arrested or executed by the NKVD.
- EXAMPLES:
 - Boris Pasternak: 'Dr Zhivago'. He kept his work self-censored and locked it away, and only published it after Stalin's death.
 - Dmitri Shostakovich: 'Lady Macbeth'. Stalin criticised this work for being pro-Western, and Shostakovich was avoided by his fellow musicians but was spared arrest.
 - Boris Shumyatsky: he was given the job of modernising the film industry but when Stalin was not satisfied with his progress, he was arrested and shot in 1938.