Why did Stalin promote industrialization?

Motives for industrialisation

If we are backward and weak, we may be beaten and enslaved. But if we are powerful, people must beware of us. We are 50 to 100 years behind the advanced countries of the West. We must make up this gap in 10 years. Either we do this or they crush us.

(from a speech made by STALIN to the First Conference of Workers in 1931)

Stalin's Terror

"[Josef Stalin] gives the impression of a large and crude claylike figure, a golem, into which a demonic spark has been instilled. [He was nonetheless] a man who perhaps more than any other determined the course of the twentieth century." – Robert Conquest

Introduction

Although Stalin would have preferred to have been remembered for his towering economic achievements, he is most closely associated with The Purges. Through a combination of terror and show trials, he succeeded in wiping out millions of his fellow communists and countrymen in the years leading up to World War Two.

By 1940 Stalin had arrested and executed almost every important living **Bolshevik** from the Revolution. Of 1,966 delegates to the party congress in 1934, 1,108 were arrested. Of the 139 Central Committee members of 1934, over 90 were shot. Five of the 11 found in the Politburo of 1934 were killed, many in mysterious circumstances.

Even members of the **secret police** were charged with treason. In 1936, **Yagoda**, the Head of the NKVD, was removed from post and shot. **Yezhov**, his successor, known as the "poison dwarf" only lasted two years before he too was killed. Lower ranking NKVD men were accused of not rounding up enough traitors, and they too were shot.

The **Yezhovshchina** ("era of Yezhov," named for NKVD chief Nikolay Yezhov) ravaged the **military** as well, leading to the execution or incarceration of about half the officer corps. Three out of five Soviet marshals and one-third of the Red Army officers were arrested or shot. Outside of politics, many millions of others died in the purges.

Ordinary people too were "purged". It is suggested that between 1934 and 1939 as many as 12 million people may have died either from execution or in the labour camps. A further 12 million were still alive in labour camps in 1939.

The key defendant, Leon **Trotsky**, was living in exile abroad, but he still did not survive Stalin's desire to have him dead and was assassinated by a Soviet agent in 1940.

Stalinist history

Stalin with Nikolai Yezhov.

Stalin with Yezhov removed.

Lenin and Trotsky celebrate the second anniversary of the Russian Revolution in

Lenin Celebrates, but Trotsky has been airbrushed out.

Questions:
1) Was the Terror necessary for Stalin to maintain power?
2) Why were photos changed ? (See Below)

(a) Poetry

By A. O. Avdienko, an article in Pravda, 1936

O great Stalin, O leader of the peoples / Thou who broughtest man to birth / Thou who fructifies the earth / Thou who restorest to centuries / Thou who makest bloom the spring / Thou who makest vibrate the musical chords... / Thou, splendour of my spring, O thou / Sun reflected by millions of hearts.

(b) Prose

Montefiore, "The Court of the Red Tsar"

"On 26th October 1932, a chosen elite of 50 writers were mysteriously invited to the art deco mansion of Russia's greatest living writer, Maxim Gorky. Ever since the late 1920's, Gorky had holidayed with Stalin...Stalin named the Moscow Art theatre after the writer [arguing that] 'Gorky is a vain man. We must bind him with cables to the party'. At the party, Stalin proposed "The artist ought to show life truthfully. And if he shows our life truthfully he cannot fail to show it moving towards socialism. This is, and will be, Socialist Realism...even more than machines, tanks and aeroplanes, we need human souls""

By A. O. Avdienko, an article in Pravda, 1936

"Centuries will pass, and the generations still to come will regard us as the happiest of mortals, as the most fortunate of men, because we lived in the century of centuries, because we were privileged to see Stalin, our inspired leader. Yes, and we regard ourselves as the happiest of mortals because we are the contemporaries of a man who never had an equal in world history. Every time I have found myself in his presence I have been subjugated by his strength, his charm, his grandeur. I have experienced a great desire to sing, to cry out, to shout with joy and happiness...

I love a young woman with a renewed love and shall perpetuate myself in my children - all thanks to thee, great educator, Stalin. I shall be eternally happy and joyous, all thanks to thee, great educator, Stalin. Everything belongs to thee, chief of our great country. And when the woman I love presents me with a child the first word it shall utter will be: Stalin"

Highlight a few phrases in each of the sources above to illustrate the ways in which prose and poetry were used to develop the "Stalin Myth".

(a) Pictures

The complexity of Stalin's visual stature is that while he was portrayed as a man of the people, at the same time he is idolized as a deity. The day to day visual imagery of Stalin was probably the most important aspect in constructing his myth. The fact that Stalin could be a Georgian peasant (power derived from the people: principles of Socialism), a father figure (power derived as a protector: a replacement for the Tsar), and a deity (power derived from God: a replacement for the Orthodox church) all at once served to create the powerful "Cult of Stalin."

http://it.stlawu.edu/~rkreuzer/indv2/convis.htm

"Stalin's Cult Of Personality"

О каждом из нас заботится Сталин в Кремле

What impression of Stalin does each of these posters seek to create?

Propaganda

Workers were bombarded with posters which aimed to generate support for the industrialisation programme. What is the purpose of each of the following propaganda pieces?

The Soviet people and industrialisation

The Soviet people achieved so much in such a short time. This happened because all the country's wealth belongs to the working people who create this wealth. The Stakhanovite movement spread all over the country. Thousands of workers produced more that their quota. Miracles were created by the enthusiastic work of the Soviet people.

from a Soviet school textbook published in 1976.

Assignment: Edit or alter a historical photo of Stalin, Mussolini or Hitler!

- **Directions:** Select a historical photo from the Internet, featuring Stalin, Hitler, or Mussolini. Photoshop the picture to eliminate their political opponents or perhaps the dictator himself!!! Or, will you make these men seem more evil than real life? (Stay PG 13 please!) The photo edit must be professional and realistic-looking, not cartoonish with scribbles! Feature the "before" and "after" photos together, along with a caption featuring the political message for the altered photo!