THE REIGN OF STALIN

The Five Year Plans:
Stalin modernised industry by means of the 5-Year Plans. He achieved fantastic successes, but at the most appalling human cost, and while industrial output soared, the production of consumer goods remained static.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1927</th>
<th>1932</th>
<th>1937</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coal</td>
<td>35 million tons</td>
<td>64 mt (75 mt target)</td>
<td>128 mt (152 mt target)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil</td>
<td>12 million tons</td>
<td>21 mt (22 mt target)</td>
<td>29 mt (47 mt target)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iron Ore</td>
<td>5 million tons</td>
<td>12 mt (19 mt target)</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pig Iron</td>
<td>3 million tons</td>
<td>6 mt (10 mt target)</td>
<td>15 mt (16 mt target)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steel</td>
<td>4 million tons</td>
<td>6 mt (10 mt target)</td>
<td>18 mt (17 mt target)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Many regions of the USSR were backward. Stalin said that to be backward was to be defeated and enslaved. ‘But if you are powerful, people must beware of you’

2. Stalin believed (with Lenin) that the USSR should ‘overtake and outstrip the capitalist countries’. He believed in ‘Socialism in one country’ – the USSR would become strong enough to survive, then would take over the rest of the world.

3. He believed Germany would invade. In 1931, he prophesied: ‘We make good the difference in 10 years or they crush us’.

4. The 5-year plans were very useful propaganda – for Communism and for Stalin.
FIRST PLAN 1928- 1932

• Unrealistic goals (industry to improve by 180%)
• Concentrated on heavy industry (iron, coal, steel, tractors and electricity)
• Private trade/ private profit made illegal in 1930
• Incentives and proscriptive schemes introduced to convince workers to achieve their best and meet targets.
• Grain production increased in order to pay for imported technical machinery
SECOND PLAN 1932-1937

- Consolidate gains of first plan, while promoting rise of living standards
- This was more a policy of consolidation
- By 1937 USSR self sufficient in machine making-transport/ communications grow rapidly.
- Metallurgy developed for the first time
- Some growth in consumer goods (footwear/ food processing, ice cream) not enough
Third Plan 1938-1943

- Objective: production to double, and consumer goods increase.
- Interrupted by WWII
- Labour shortages and fuel crisis also resulted in targets not being met
- Defence/ armaments grew rapidly- resources directed to them particularly as Hitler makes moves across Europe
- Oil production led to a fuel crisis, factories short of materials.
1. Plans were drawn up by GOSPLAN (the state planning organisation)

2. Targets were set for every industry, each region, each mine and factory, each foreman and even every worker.

3. Foreign experts & engineers were called in

4. Workers were bombarded with propaganda, posters, slogans and radio broadcasts.

5. Workers were fined if they did not meet their targets.

6. Alexei Stakhanov (who cut an amazing 102 tons of coal in one shift) was held up as an example. Good workers could become ‘Stakhanovites' and win a medal.
• 7. (After the First 5-year plan revealed a shortage of workers) women were attracted by new crèches and day-care centres so that mothers could work.

• 8. For big engineering projects such as dams or canals, slave labour (such as political opponents, kulaks or Jews) was used.

• 9. There was a concentration on heavy industry at the expense of consumer goods or good housing.

• 10. Stalin attacked the Muslim faith because he thought it was holding back industrialisation.
**Successes**

1. The USSR was turned into a modern state (which was able to resist Hitler's invasion).
2. There was genuine Communist enthusiasm among the young ‘Pioneers’.
3. There were huge achievements in the following areas:
   - New cities
   - Dams/ hydroelectric power
   - Transport & communications
   - The Moscow Underground
   - Farm machinery
   - Electricity
   - Coal
   - Steel
   - Fertilizers
   - Plastic
   - No unemployment
   - Doctors & medicine
   - Education.

**Failures**

1. Poorly organised – inefficiency, duplication of effort and waste.
2. Appalling human cost:
   - Discipline (sacked if late)
   - Secret police
   - Slave labour
   - Labour camps (for those who made mistakes)
   - Accidents and deaths (100,000 workers died building the Belomor Canal)
   - Few consumer goods
   - Poor housing
   - Wages FELL
   - No human rights
3. Some historians claim the tsars had done the ‘spadework’, setting up the basis for industrialisation, and that Stalin’s effort had very little effect on a process that would have happened anyway.