

How much  
change

## Stalinism

*Josef Stalin brooked no challenge  
To his totalitarian state:  
Every measure, wrought by terror,  
Sealed the Soviet Union's fate:*

Authority  
Subordination to  
Personality

The party and its police force  
Backed his power to the hilt,  
The cult of status  
Soon to inflate his claim;

Terror: Party

After Kirov's murder,  
Many professed false guilt,  
And dying, swore  
The party bore no blame.

Army

Vishinski purged the military  
Of 9/10ths of its command,  
Which left it infirm  
At first 'gainst German tanks;

Propaganda:  
Society

All children to show humility,  
Were intellectually disarmed,  
And for his social plannin'  
Gave none but Stalin thanks.

*Jose Stalin brooked no challenge  
To his demigod despot rule  
Of an anti-Democratic Soviet state;  
Beside measures to mesmerise,  
Terror was the tool  
To eliminate opposition & debate.*

Prosperity  
Sufficiency by  
Collectivisation

All farms to be collective  
And with 50+ combined,  
Shared tractors  
Common practice on the land;  
He purged the richer kulaks,  
Whose profit was their crime,  
But those left could not  
Reap half of what  
was planned.

Purges

Compare with other Authority Prosperity Security:  
Lenin's Legacy; Khrushchev; Brezhnev Gorbachev

*...Stalin maintained power by exploiting party  
machine that he'd dominated since appointed  
General Secretary 1922. Constitution of 1936,  
mocked democratic principles it was supposed to  
uphold, thus to veil atrocities of the previous 7  
years v. any who dared oppose him.*

...Stalin cultivated art of status more effectively than  
any, incl. Hitler; omni-presence of Stalin's image  
not hard-faced, but avuncular, kindly expression,  
not staring out like Hitler's 1938 poster of *Ein  
Reich, Ein Volk, Ein Fuhrer!*

...Kirov: Leningrad Soviet secretary 1934 acc. to  
Khrushchev, on Stalin's order; range of suspects  
arrested: NKVD (Secret Police) executed 1,108 of  
1,996 delegates 1934 Congress; 98 of 139 of  
Central committee, confessing to spare families.

...1937 army purge similar: all 11 commissars; 3 of  
5 marshals; 75 of 80 Supreme military councillors;  
14 of 16 army commanders; 2/3rds of divisional  
commanders; half of commissioned officers  
(c.35,000 in all) blamed for 1941 failure.

...Soviet society purged at every level: education  
strictly controlled, curriculum stressed absolute  
power/ quasi-divine status of Stalin by rigid, terror-  
enforced censorship provoked surreal assertions  
designed to curry favour: "Russian watches go faster  
than other watches..."

*∴ Stalin was an absolute, semi-divine despot,  
whose will and whim spelt exile or death to all who  
challenged him. Stalinism was a brutal, merciless  
regime whose servants were often more diabolically  
vicious than Stalin himself. And yet, there were  
millions of Soviet citizens, who genuinely  
worshipped him.*

\* Economic revolution by collectivisation of  
agriculture & rapid industrialisation, subject to  
strict, often impossible target-setting, monitored by  
party officials, answerable to Stalin; collective &  
state farms combined 50 to 100 small holdings to  
share machinery & production.

\* *Kulak* problem created by Stalin to justify  
wholesale subjection of peasantry: 1st 5 yr. plan  
catastrophic: livestock more than halved 1928-32;  
famine killed 10 - 15 million; farms collectivised by  
1941: *kolkhoz* collective. *sovkhoz* (state farms) 23%  
in 1930; 98% in 1941.

Industrialisation

For coal and steel and energy,  
While a quarter were coerced,  
Stakhanov resourced  
Magnitogorsk, hell-bent;  
The need to supply the military,  
Meant factories fit to burst,  
With major production  
Up 500 per cent

Militarisation

Soviet anti-  
Capitalist state

*Jose Stalin brooked no challenge  
To his demigod despot rule  
Of an anti-Bourgeois Soviet state;  
Beside measures to mechanise,  
Terror was the tool  
To eradicate every capitalist trait.*

Security

from Capitalism  
bOct'2

He saw the Great Depression  
Marking Capitalism's end,  
Bade goading "Social  
Fascists" to protest;

from Isolation  
1933

He joined the League of Nations,  
And "assisted" Czechs & French,  
With his constitution  
Meant to seduce the West.

1935  
1936

But post-*Anschluss* and Munich,  
Animosity grew worse,  
And though the Nazi pact  
Gained Poland back, instead...

from Fascism  
1938

by Nazi Soviet  
pact 1939

Confounding Hitler's *Blitzkrieg*:  
White frost and blackened earth,  
Land East, Lend lease,  
And 20 million dead.

v. Fascism by war:  
5 factors for  
victory.

Josef Stalin  
1878-1953

*Jose Stalin brooked no challenge  
To his demigod despot rule  
Of an anti-Fascist Soviet state;  
Beside measures to militarise,  
Terror was the tool, to get him  
To the Brandenburg gate, first,  
And there determine Europe's fate*

...heavy industry accelerated for national security  
achievements at Magnitogorsk by volunteer (50%)  
forced (25%) labour; propoganda over reality; steel  
& coal output 3x 2<sup>nd</sup> 5 year plan canals & railways  
lengthened rapidly during war

...progress achieved at huge cost: working class  
movements banned; intimidation & slaughter of  
villages or factories failing to meet quotas concealed  
by massaged production statistics; geared towards  
military requirements: coal, steel & electricity  
production - up by 500%.

*∴ Stalin responsible for lightning speed at which  
Russia collectivised, mechanised & industrialised:  
he achieved in 10 years what the Tsarist system had  
failed to do over the previous 100, though the  
heights of production were matched by the depths  
of inhumanity.*

...relations with West affected by use of Great  
Depression Oct'29 to condemn capitalism as  
corrupt & near collapse; urged communist activists  
in W. Europe to challenge extremist right wing  
groups, believing (wrongly) it would destabilise  
democracy & lead to socialist govts.

...saw need for peace with the West: joined League  
of Nations; mutual assistance pact v Fascism w/  
France & Czechoslovakia; published "democratic"  
constitution; Germany, Italy Japan formed anti-  
Communist International ~ Comintern

...failed to convince GB & France of German  
threat: so appeasement of Hitler after *Anschluss*  
with Austria & seizure of Sudetenland ended hope  
of E-W coalition; so pact with Hitler to partition  
Poland & restore pre-war E. Europe.

...strategically, Hitler's bridgehead for invasion, to  
which Russian army, its generals removed by 1937  
purge, had no answer. Survival and victory made  
possible by winter, scorched earth tactics, transfer  
of heavy industry east of the Urals, expansion of  
railways & US treasury.

*∴ Stalinism a double-edged sword. Without it,  
Russia might not have modernised to provide  
decisive resistance to the German armies. Alec  
Nove (Stalinism p21) quotes a Soviet colleague  
thus: "His character was indivisible; we could not  
have one without the other. How can we weigh up  
the positive against the negative?"*

Refs: Lynch: Stalin & Khrushchev USSR 1924-64;  
Macaulay: Stalin and Stalinism; Alec Nove:  
Stalinism (Hist. Ass. Pamphlet No.5) WWW