

# LESSON – STALIN AND INDUSTRIALIZATION

*1928 – Reasons for the Industrialization – “the Second Revolution” – “Revolution from above” – GOSPLAN – FYP – Aim – Methods - Organization – Results - ...*

## Key dates

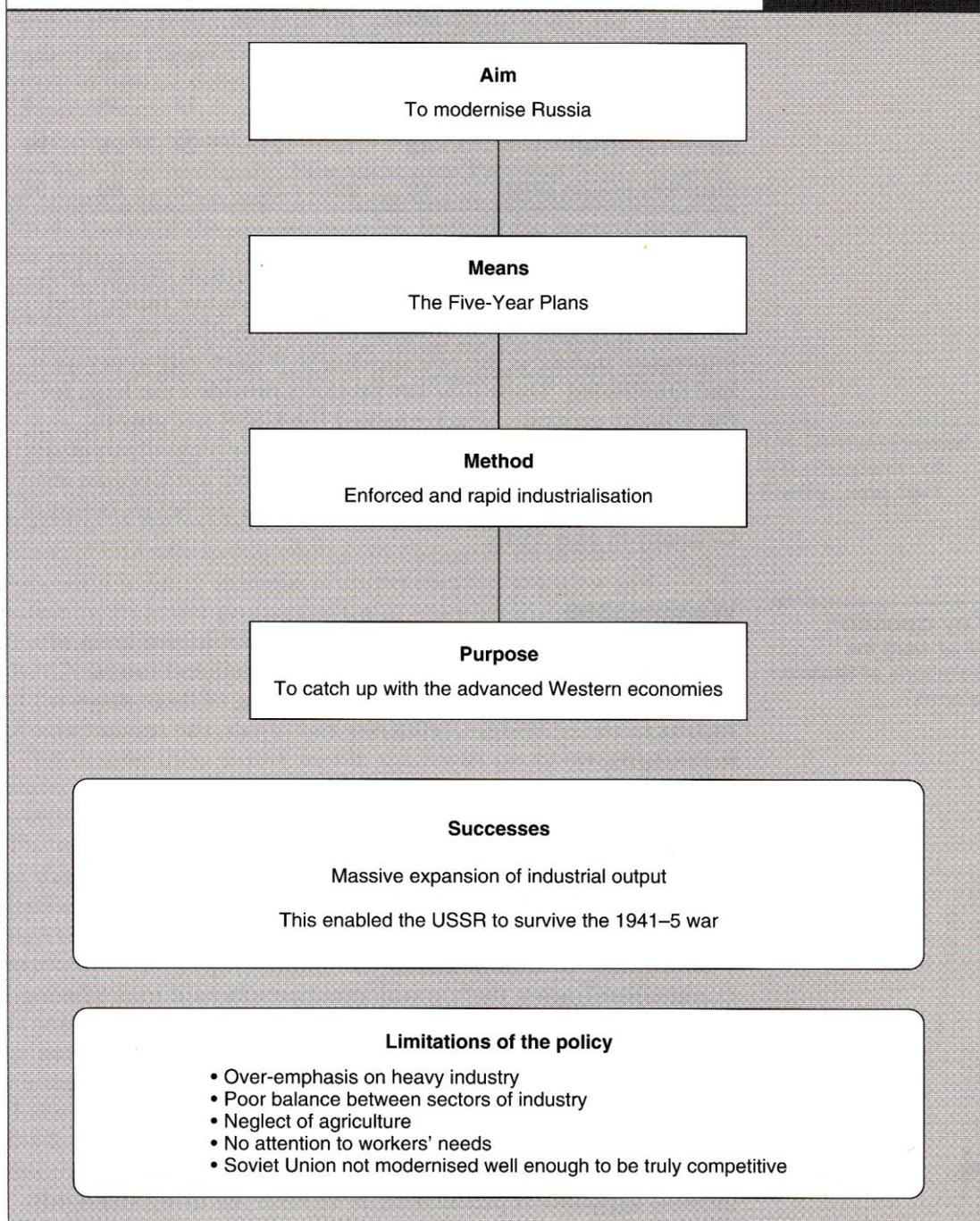
1928      *Widespread famine in the USSR  
Collectivization began  
Start of the first FYP (Five-Year Plan) 1932-3*

1933      *Start of the second FYP*

1938      *Start of the third FYP*

1941-5    *The Great Patriotic War*

## Summary diagram: Industrialisation



## Why did the Soviet Union need to industrialize?

There were three main reasons for developing industry quickly;

- To provide the machinery especially tractors, needed to mechanize farming and produce more food
- To catch up with the Western world and make Russia less dependent on the West for industrial goods
- To have a strong industry capable of producing armaments so that Russia could defend itself from attack

To be able to carry through the necessary changes Stalin and the Central Committee gave **GOSPLAN** (the Central Planning Committee) the task to organize a fully planned and centralized economic policy. The **GOSPLAN** determined what, how, when and where something should be produced. They also determined prices and wages. The result was the **FYP** (Five Year Plans);

<b>First Five Year Plan -</b>	1928-1933
<b>Second Five Year Plan -</b>	1933-1937
<b>Third Five Year Plan -</b>	1937-1942 (interrupted by WWII)

The **first FYP** concentrated on the production of energy and of construction materials; coal, oil, electricity, iron, steel, cement, and machine production. This production should lay the foundations for future industrial growth. The target within each sector was often to double or triple the production... Coal, Oil, Iron, and Pig iron doubled their output...

	1927	Target	1932	
COAL	35.4	(75)	64.3	million tons
OIL	11.7	(22)	21.4	million tons
IRON ORE	5.7	(19)	12.1	million tons
PIG IRON	3.3	(10)	6.2	million tons
STEEL	4.0	(10.4)	5.9	million tons

The machinery output increased four times!!! Electrical output went up 250%.

**1500 new industrial plants** were constructed and **over 100 new towns** were built. Some of these were “**show pieces**”;

**MAGNITOGORSK**                      URALS – Iron and Steel production  
**KUZNETSK**                         SIBERIA – Iron and Steel production

Several other big projects also occurred like the construction of the **DNIEPROSTROI DAM** (biggest in Europe)...

The **Second FYP** concentrated on **heavy industry**; Coal, Oil, Iron, Pig Iron and Steel. The targets were now a bit more realistic, but still they were often too high. Beside the above concentration on heavy industry some emphasis was also put into **new industries – such as metallurgy**; lead, zinc, nickel and tin as well as **chemicals**. The improvement of communication was another target;

- *The railroads were largely double-tracked*

- *Canals were built (like the Moscow-Volga and Volga-Don Canals)*
- *The Moscow Metro...*

but before the end of the second FYP the international situation demanded some of the resources to be put into the armament industries (3.4% of the total expenditure in 1933 and 16.1% in 1936!).

	1933	Target	1937	
COAL	64.3	(152.5)	128	million tons
OIL	21.4	(46.8)	28.5	million tons
IRON ORE	12.1	(?)	(?)	million tons
PIG IRON	6.2	(16)	14.5	million tons
STEEL	5.9	(17)	17.5	million tons



*Metro in Moscow*

The **Third FYP** came in 1937 and was intended to last to 1942, but it was interrupted by the German attack on Russia 1941. Due to the international situation more and more of the resources were concentrated on the armament industries; tanks, airplanes, weapons... By 1940 the government invested about **32.6%** of the total expenditure in the rearmament.

***Did the three Five Year Plans reach the main aim – to make the USSR catch up with the western capitalist economies?***

**YES!**

- the production of industrial goods was 2.6 times greater than in 1928
- the production of iron, oil and electricity grew even faster
- the urban work force grew; in the end of the 1930's it was 32% of the total work force (compared with 47% peasantry)
- the gross national product of the USSR increased by nearly 12% between 1928-1937 (compared with USA: 1.3%, Great Britain: 2.5% and Germany: 2.6%)
- no unemployment (1.7 million in 1929)!
- Many women found work – 4 out of 5 new workers were women during the period 1932-1937

**but the human cost had been high!!!**

- all human rights were gone
- people were moved to areas where no equipment existed, where there was not any (or very poor) housing and poor wages...
- during the two first FYPs – food shortages and rationing
- the unrealistic quotas often meant neglect of safety precautions – so there were many accidents and deaths (over 100 000 workers died when the canals were built)

## **HOW WAS THE INDUSTRIALIZATION ORGANIZED?**

On the very top was the state planning commission – **GOSPLAN** (founded in 1921).

**INDIVIDUAL PLANS/TARGETS** were set for each industry.

**SINGLE MANAGERS** were reintroduced by Stalin to run state enterprises and factories. They were responsible for the targets they had to fulfil. If they did well they were rewarded with large houses, cars, etc... if they didn't they were threatened with prison, labour camps and in some cases death!

**Foreign SPECIALISTS and EXPERTS were brought in.** They were going to help develop the industry. Several American and British engineers came to the USSR these years. They help construct the Dniepr Dam and the Ford motor company helped the Soviet car industry to build 140 000 cars in 1932.

**PROBLEMS:** The Central planning was though not very efficient – when one factory depended on another for parts sometimes they were forced to wait weeks and there was no other producer. In the factories untrained workers had to produce goods fairly quickly to fulfil the targets. This led to many mistakes. Machines were wrecked and the product sometimes became so poor that it was unusable. These mistakes were not accepted – “wreckers” and “saboteurs” were found and punished...

## **HOW DID STALIN GET THE WORKERS TO WORK SO HARD?**

The USSR hardly had any consumer goods. They had **low wages, food shortage, poor work and living conditions.** *Still the workers worked very hard. WHY?*

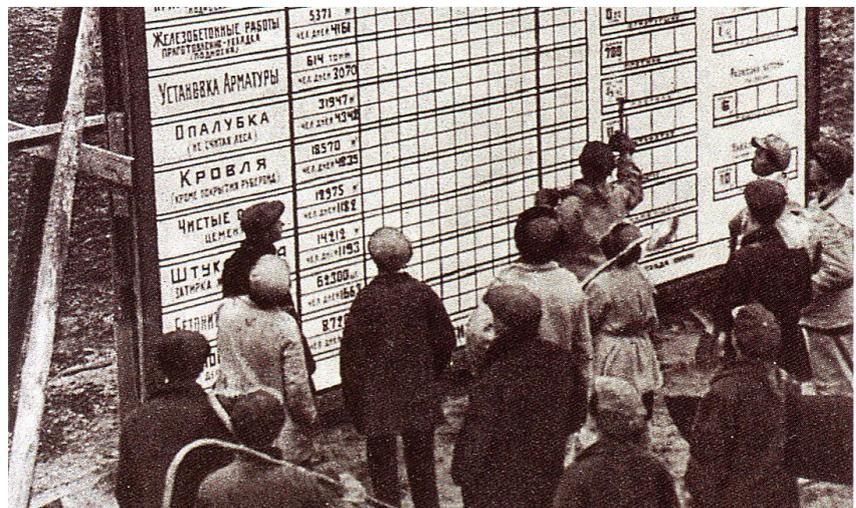
- **Communistic enthusiasm** existed, especially among the young “pioneers” who wanted to build a better Soviet society
- **Propaganda!** Show pieces, films, posters, newspapers and radio was all under total government control – and the government used it!
- **Awards and Honour! The Stakhanovite movement...** (Stakhanov was a Donbass miner who moved 102 tons of coal during one work shift – compared with the normal amount of 7 tons). The **Stakhanovites** got **better housing, free holidays and cash prizes...**
- **Better wages** – especially for skilled workers. They could get up to 4 times the wages of an unskilled worker...

*But also;*

- The workers had to always carry their **“labour books”** with them. In this book their job was recorded as well as unfavourable comments about them. *A bad record could lead to less food rations or imprisonment.* This was one way of controlling the work force...
- the **“uninterrupted week”** was introduced in 1929 (shift work all week, so the machines never stopped)
- the old Tsarist system of **Internal passports** were reintroduced (in December 1932) which made it impossible for the workers to move around – trying to find a place that paid well
- **Absenteeism and late arrival was punished!** First the worker had to **pay fine**, later he **risked the loss of rations**. If it was repeated he **could lose his job and/or his housing**. After 1931 such offences were criminalized and punished by **imprisonment or deportation to labour camps**. In 1929 OGPU had established many forced labour camps in several remote regions. The Chief Administration of Camps – the **GULAG** ran these camps. **The number of prisoners grew from 30 000 in 1928 to about 3 million in 1939.** Many of the prisoners were deported ex-kulaks or workers... In the later 1930's victims of the Purges became more numerous
- **Industrial planning was affected by the Purges** – thousands of managers and experts were imprisoned or executed



*A photograph of Alexei Stakhanov*



*A board showing production plans and targets (Competition board)*

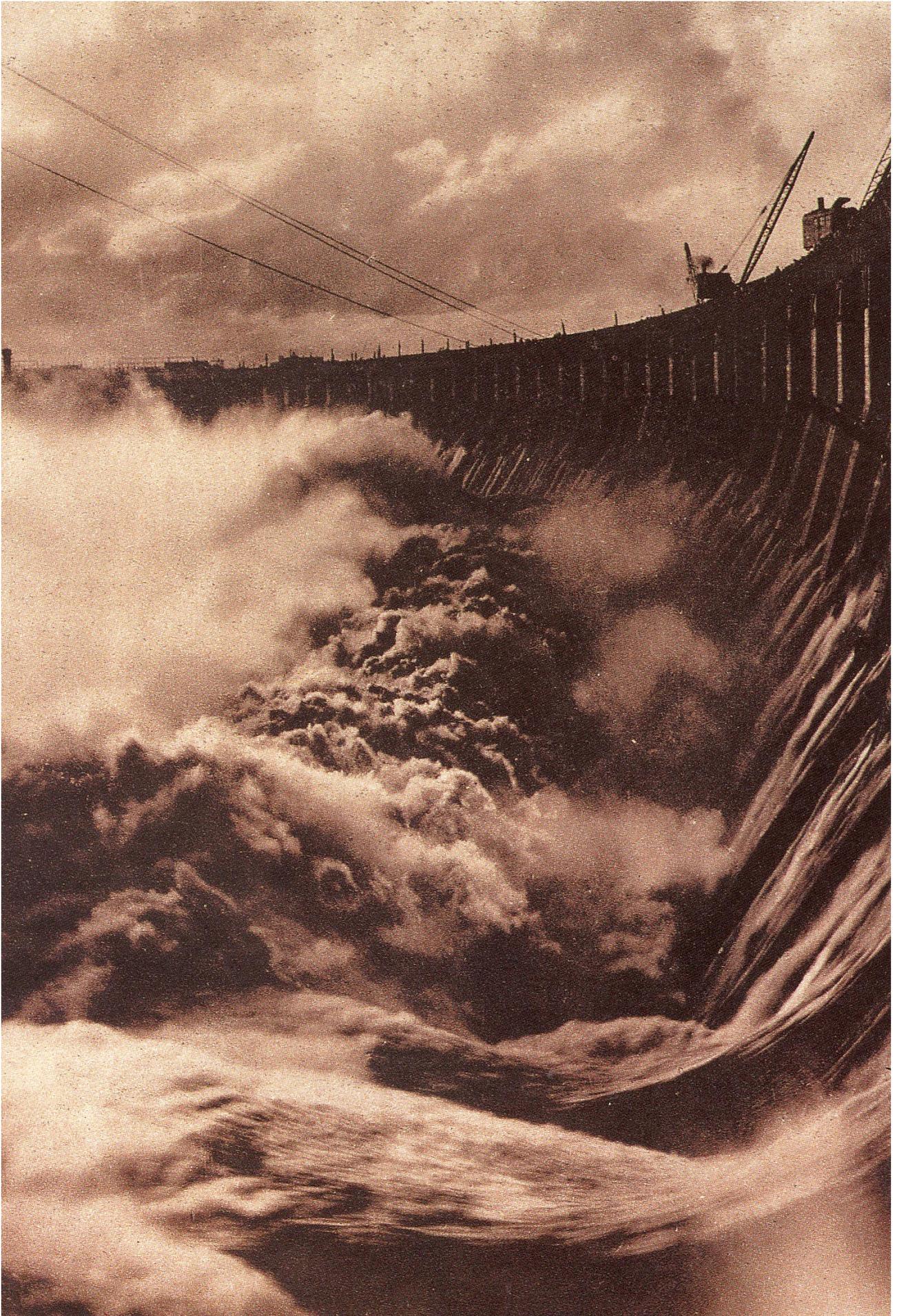
**MAGNITOGORSK**







Soviet Cartoon from 1933 – the sign says “Five Year Plan”



*The Dnieprostroi Dam*