

The USSR: Stalin and Khrushchev

Background/ Prior Topics Covered:

Stalin- RTP Summary 1924-29

KEY POSTS			
1917: Commissar for Nationalities	1919: Liaison Officer Polit/Orburgos	1919: Head of Worker' Inspectorate	1922: General Secretary
THE POWER STRUGGLE			
Triumvirate (Kamenev, Zinoviev, Stalin) vs Trotsky			
ISSUES			
Bureaucratisation	NEP	Permanent Revolution	
1926: The 'New Opposition' (Trotsky, Kamenev, Zinoviev) vs Stalin and the Right (Bukharin, Rykov, Tomsky)			
ISSUES			
NEP	'Socialism in One Country'	Permanent Revolution	
1927: Trotsky defeated and expelled from the party			
1928: Stalin vs Right Opposition			
ISSUES			
End of NEP	Treatment of Peasantry	Industrialisation	
1929: Right defeated- Bukharin, Rykov and Tomsky dismissed			

Stalin and the Soviet Economy:

THE SECOND REVOLUTION	
AIM: The Modernisation of the USSR	
MEANS: Revolutions from above	
METHODS:	
De-Kulakisation Collectivisation of agriculture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The grain surplus myth Famine 	'A War Economy' Industrialisation Heavy Industry: 1928-32: The First Five Year Plan 1933-37: The Second Five Year Plan 1938-41: The Third Five Year Plan
WEAKNESSES:	
Under-capitalised Under-productive	Over-emphasis on heavy industry
STRENGTH:	
The sinews of war 1941-45	
Postwar reconstruction	
1946-50: The Fourth Five Year Plan	
1951-55: The Fifth Five Year Plan	

Stalin and Power:

The Prelude		
Defeat of Right and Left Opposition	Trial of Ryutinites	Expulsion from CPSU
1934: MURDER OF KIROV		
1936-39: THE GREAT PURGE		
The Purge of the Party	The Purge of the Army	The Purge of the People
1941-45: Wartime deportations		
1945-53: The purges continue		
The Satellites	The Leningrad Affair	The Doctors Plot

Stalin and International Relations:

Foreign Policy before Stalin:

- According to the theory of Marxism, the 1917 revolution should have been followed by proletarian seizures of power in other countries
- This did not occur, in fact almost the reverse occurred
- During the Civil War 1918-20, other nations such as France, UK, Japan and USA carried out armed interventions, which were won by the Bolsheviks but exposed their vulnerability
- Events in neighbouring countries proved that similar revolutions were unlikely - with Communist revolutions in Germany and Hungary crushed by authorities
- Even worse for the Soviets - their 1920 invasion of Poland saw them being thrown out
- This led Lenin to focus on Russia's internal revolution
- Lenin knew that the capitalist nations were too strong and the Russian revolutionaries too weak so he had to modify the Soviet foreign policy
- The Soviets had to co-exist with other nations - an adaptation of the desired foreign policy that Lenin was always willing to do if need be
- Lenin stated in 1921 that: *"Our foreign policy while we are alone and while the capitalist world is strong consists in our exploiting contradictions"*
- What this meant was that even though the Soviets were not strong enough to defeat the capitalists, they played on the differences between the capitalist powers such as Britain, France and Germany to prevent anti-Bolshevik alliances
- Fear of a West invasion has been a part of Russian foreign policy since the time of the tsars which was only fostered by the reaction of European governments to the 1917 Revolution wanting a crusade on the Russians
- The Soviet Union became obsessed with their own defence
- "Compromise and survival, rather than provocation and expansion, were the guiding principles of the foreign policy,"
- The theory and the practice of Soviet foreign policy is therefore quite different
- Looking at Soviet propaganda, it is clear that they were determined to try and make their revolution spread across the globe
- Comintern (Communist International organisation) had been set up in Moscow 1919
- In practice however, the Bolsheviks knew that Soviet Russia was not in a position to do such a thing and instead aimed to sustain the revolution internally before looking elsewhere
- The **Treaty of Rapallo 1922** was an interesting agreement between the Bolsheviks and Germany
- It was necessary however for both countries as they had been earlier labelled in 1918 by UK PM Lloyd George as outcasts in Europe
- This treaty provided German soldiers with training grounds in Russia (against terms of TOV) in return for Russia creating trade agreements with Germany (as it was denied this by the rest of Europe)

Anglo-Soviet Relations 1924-29:

- 1921 Anglo-Soviet agreement gave Bolsheviks first international recognition
- 1924 saw movements to make this into a formal treaty
- Such a thing was prevented by scandal in Britain in Oct with publication of the 'Zinoviev Letter'
- The document was marked 'very secret' and called upon the members of the British Communist Party to penetrate the current Labour government and prepare for an armed revolution
- Historians believe that *it was most likely an act of White forgery, yet due to opinions of the time, many accepted it as real*
- In 1924 a new Conservative government stepped in and immediately withdrew the Soviet recognition
- They blamed the Soviets for supporting workers in the 1926 General Strikes in Britain

- 1927 a raid on a Russian trade delegation was conducted by police in London on grounds of fears of it being an espionage ring
- Some improvements occurred in 1929 when a new Labour government stepped in and formal recognition was resorted and commercial agreements discussed
- The Anglo Soviet relations of the 1920s illustrate that the acts of Comintern were in opposition to the diplomatic and commercial interests of Soviet Union
- Comintern wanted to disturb other nations but in turn, undermined the trade potential for the Soviets- and overall the Soviets got the worst of everything

Stalin's Approach to International Affairs:

- Initially Stalin had little interest in other countries having been out of Russia and therefore less experience with Russian foreign affairs than Lenin or Trotsky
- He was placed in a role that made him responsible for coordinating international revolutions as a part of Comintern but did not pay a lot of attention to this
- He instead looked towards his policy of 'Socialism in One Country' which required attention of internal affairs
- Under Stalin Comintern was limited to protecting the USSR and any foreign nations wanting to be a part of Comintern had to swear obedience to the dictatorship of the Soviet Union
- Under Stalin, rather than being an international frontline for Communism, Comintern was made a part of the Soviet foreign office
- Trotsky tried to use this against Stalin in their struggle for power accusing him of abandoning the support of international supporters of the proletarian revolution
- Criticism from Trotsky also arose over the situation in China between the struggling Communists and the Nationalists
- Stalin believed that an alliance between the two parties should be maintained as had previously been; Comintern was placed in charge of seeing to this
- Trotsky labelled this as betrayal and condemned Stalin as the grave-digger of the Chinese revolution
- When Stalin was victorious in winning power however, all such criticism ceased
- In 1927, not only were there troubles with relations between Britain and China but also due to rumours of a national invasion in Poland
- A strong anti-Soviet line was being taken in Poland and the hostility could be felt in the USSR
- The tensions felt in Moscow and Leningrad were especially strong
- Stalin deliberately fed such fears to strengthen the nation
- They were not completely manufactured and did produce strong internal reaction which did often strengthen the nation
- It is today accepted that *the mutual fears however were greatly exaggerated. There was never any capitalist plot against the Soviet Union and never a possibility of a Soviet-organised international revolution*
- Disagreements between the Soviets and Britain and Poland brought them and Germany closer together as both feared the rise of a powerful Poland
- Historians believe that *the grim records of persecution by Stalin's secret police of Soviet nationals and foreign residence deepened the suspicious which USSR regarded other nations. It tended to make nonsense of Soviet claims that the USSR was a workers state and suffering was eliminated*

Soviet Foreign Policy in the 1930s:

1929-33:

- Not everyone in the West was fearful of the Soviets
- Those who aligned themselves with the political left often remained faithful to Soviet ideas

- Such occurred in Britain when a second labour government came in and reformed both diplomatic and trade relations with the USSR
- Stalin's victories in 1929 led to much tougher policies upon other countries
- This was not directed at governments but rather the non-Communist parties of the Left
- Alliances were ended between Moscow recognised Communist parties and non-Communist parties
- Movements that included the Labour Party in Britain and similar movements in France and Germany were labelled 'social-fascists' that delayed the progress towards an international revolution
- However real fascism that was beginning in Italy and making its way to Germany was largely ignored
- In the late 1920s early 30s Stalin began an industrialisation and collectivisation program at the same time as the Great Depression
- This meant that while the Soviets were enjoying some success the capitalist West was suffering
- This can be seen as perhaps a reason why Stalin ignored the rise of fascism initially
- In the long term, Stalin would pay for this ignorance, particularly to the situation in Germany
- Prior to 1933 when Hitler rose to power, Stalin did not believe them to be strong enough to achieve their goals
- He may have been misled by the party name 'National Socialists' believing that it may have been a part of a workers revolution

1933-39:

- Even after Hitler came to power, Stalin still did not see the full implications
- He tried to maintain the 11 year alliance between them
- The 1934 signing of the German polish non-aggression pact was a clear threat to the Soviets- convincing Stalin that Rapallo was dead
- Nazis produced anti-Bolshevik propaganda, equal to their anti-Semitism
- Isolation returned to the USSR
- Soviets then looked to finding allies to off-set German threats- sometimes referred to as a 'turnabout' in Soviet policy
- Germany was now a threat rather than a security means
- *Domenic Lieven draws parallels between Soviet foreign policy under Stalin and that of the Tsars:*
 - Stalin was faced with the same threats and had the same options.
 - He could form an alliance with UK and France or he could deflect German expansion West and hope that in the meantime the Germans, Brits and France would exhaust each other
 - Meanwhile Russia could increase its power by developing their own resources
 - In 1939, after failing to come to agreements with the West, Stalin deflected
- 1934 admission into the League allowed the Soviets to lessen their isolation
- It allowed them to adopt the principle of collective security into their international affairs
- In 1935 France, USSR and Czechoslovakia promised 'mutual assistance' in the event of a military attack
- They also made diplomatic contact with the US the same year
- Most significantly in 1935, Comintern reversed its policy of 'non-alignment' with the left and appealed to Europe's Popular Front to combat fascism
- This was a turnaround for the Soviets but came too late as socialists around Europe felt reluctant to assist those that had previously dismissed them
- They saw it as an act of convenience from the Soviets, facing the threat of German fascist aggression
- In an effort to encourage international support, Stalin introduced a new Constitution in 1936
- It was effectively a propaganda attempt to the rest of the world that the USSR was an egalitarian society
- The new Soviet foreign policy gained little practically
- The idea of collective security was comforting but failed in practice
- This suffered another blow in 1936 when Germany, Italy and Japan signed the Anti-Comintern Pact

- Stalin did not help the Soviets in making alliances
- Not only did he ward off the neutrals and moderates with his purges but also the political Left
- Stalin's consistent searching for defence agreements with capitalist nations, confused many
- Stalin's actions in the Spanish Civil War were also seen as odd
- He had mixed motives and rather than trying to use the War as a way to boast Communism, he used to divert attention from the USSR and the purges
- He did not aid the Republicans for free either, with the agreement to exchange military equipment for gold
- The Republicans were weary of Stalin and rightfully so
- Stalin did not in fact want victory in Spain as he feared a Communist state in the south-west would lead to France and Britain joining the anti-Communism pact with the fascist nations
- Soviet foreign policy took another blow when France, Britain, Italy and Germany signed the Munich agreement in 1938
- At this agreement, Hitler received all his demands which went against the settlement of the Treaty of Versailles, exposing Hitler's strengths and Britain and France's compliance in reluctance to go to war
- Many saw this as an act of appeasement but Stalin saw it as an attack upon the already isolated USSR
- The Soviets then pushed harder to reach an agreement with Britain and France
- The new foreign minister Molotov, proposed a formal alliance with Britain and France but they could not trust Stalin both considering Poland as safer and a better option

The Nazi-Soviet Pact 1939-41:

- **In August 1939, the Nazis and Soviets came together** in a bizarre twist of events
- In this pact, the foreign minister from each country swore to maintain peaceful relations
- When **Germany invaded Poland in Sept. of that year, it was then divided between the two**
- The Nazi-Soviet alliance was as confusing to all others as it sounds
- The British foreign officer remarked... *"all these -isms are now -wasms,"*
- Stalin felt he had no other option given the threat of German and Britain and France's reluctance to sign an agreement
- In the next two years the Soviets gained what they were entitled to- the Eastern part of Poland and then took the Baltic states and areas such as southern Finland while the war continued in the West
- **By 1941 Soviet Russia had gained back its pre WWI territory**
- The agreement also came with a **ten year guarantee of peace with Germany**
- Within the Soviet Union Stalin received praise for his diplomacy
- Stalin was convinced too by his own work and propaganda, failing to see Hitler's true intentions
- It was even written in Mein Kampf as one of Hitler's intentions to expand East into Russia
- He also failed to see that the pact allowed Germany to have its war in the West and then invade Russian sooner rather than later
- The **fall of France in 1940 and Britain's ability to do no more than survive** encouraged Hitler to launch his attack on Russia
- In the lead up to the operation preparation was so clear that it was expected before it even happened
- Stalin failed to read the signs though
- Even when, on June 15, a Comintern agent from Japan informed Stalin of the evidence that Germany was about to launch an attack, Stalin disregarded it
- He also disregarded a message to support the earlier one from head of Soviet Security at told him to go f**k himself
- **Operation Barbarossa 21 June 1941** the Germans invaded despite all signs
- The Soviet forces were overrun within the first week of WWII on the Eastern Front, whom were without leadership or direction
- Many in these areas were actually willing to let the Germans take over for their hatred of Stalinism

- Had the Germans paid more attention to this fact, they could have used it to their advantage and begun an anti-Stalin crusade
- Instead they attacked the areas with brutality and repression
- Germany eventually paid for this and the Soviets responded by committing themselves against them
- They were eventually **victorious in 1945**

The Grand Alliance, 1941-45:

- Stalin did little in the first few days of German invasion
- He eventually recovered from the disbelief and emerged as the leader the Soviets needed to take victory
- It went against his will and agreement of the Nazi-Soviet pact which called for compromise rather than fighting (but clearly in Hitler's mind the deal was off!!)
- This played a role in the alliance between Britain, USA and USSR which arose from the circumstances
- Prior to the attack, the Soviets did nothing to help Britain
- The alliance with the US was even more unnatural and only came about after the **US declared war on Japan in December 1941** (Pearl Harbour)
- This alliance became known as 'The Grand Alliance' but in reality it was "a marriage of convenience"
- In theory, they had a goal to defeat their common enemy, in practice they argued a lot
- A major disagreement was Stalin's want for a Second Front against Germany in occupied Europe to take the strain of the USSR
- Britain responded with the promise to place forces and supplies where a second front would be started but argued that a premature invasion of Europe would be a suicide mission
- Stalin responded that caution was leaving the Russians to die
- And the taunting and retaliations continued like children in a playground
- As the war drew to a close, old fears in the USSR began to resurface that the US and Britain would side with capitalism once again and enlist Germany in a war against Soviet Communism
- Similarly, in the West, fears about Soviet expansion into the East as far as Germany remerged
- This hostility explains feelings at the **1938 Yalta** conference where few agreements were decided upon
- All that was agreed was that the defeated Germany would be divided into four zones but there was no uniform system of government decided upon
- Agreements about German reparation payments were just as unsuccessful
- Stalin later claimed that it was agreed the USSR would receive 50% of German reparations against the West's claims
- Poland was also a significant issue discussed at Yalta with the USSR currently occupying it
- The current government was a pro-Soviet Provisional Government but they 'promised' free elections
- USA and Britain did not trust Stalin and feared Poland would turn into a Soviet state
- With Poland and other Eastern States, it was generally the aim to appease Stalin and he was reluctantly granted many of his wishes
- The '**Allied Declaration on Liberated Europe**' committed the USSR to peruse democracy in it occupied states (yeah right!)
- Stalin interpreted democracy a little differently (no surprise) from the others
- Stalin was not prepared to withdraw Soviet forces until pro-Soviet governments had been established in order to create a buffer against German aggression
- The Soviets also were hesitant to join the UN but joined on the condition that it was a leading member with the power to veto
- The war against Japan had expected to continue for many years so Stalin made a secret deal with Roosevelt- USSR would enter the war in return for Chinese territory after Japan's defeat
- The US however, really didn't need Stalin's help dropping atomic bombs on Japan to end the war quickly

- Immediately the USSR declared war on Japan after the first bombing and when Japan surrendered soon after, the USSR took their territory
- At the Potsdam conference, decisions were made about issues discussed at Yalta
- The Soviets continued to be ruthless in their demands
- The US and Britain had different leader to Yalta but Stalin had attended both, which worked to his advantage
- Even Truman admission of their nuclear weaponry, didn't shake Stalin (probs coz he had one too)
- At the end of the war, Stalin ordered that he be painted (literally and figuratively) as a hero of war
- Victory parades, buildings, statues, paintings were made in his honour and honour of victory

The Cold War:

- Began in 1945 and carried over a period that would outlast Stalin
- Between the US and USSR in a test of nerve
- The Soviets emerged from the war as vulnerable, particularly economically
- Advancements made in the FYPs were strained by the total war effort from 1941-45
- This is partly the reason why Stalin was so keen for the Soviets to gain from German reparations
- In the shadow of the US's awesome economic and military power, Stalin's fears were intensified
- Stalin knew that he could not compete so resorted to drawing up a defensive barrier from what he acquired in Eastern Europe

Stalin and Germany:

- At the end of the war, the new shape of the continent had already been drawn up
- The USSR took over a large part of the East, push Europe West
- 1/3 of Germany was in this zone which also contained Berlin
- Agreements made at Potsdam and Yalta decided that like Germany, Berlin would be divided into four zones
- Soon after three zones occupied by the Western allies had become West Berlin (an Island in the Communist sea)
- Stalin instructed the East Germans to Blockade the West Berlin in an effort to secure himself
- The US and Britain broke the siege with an airlift that sent supplies via narrow air corridors over 318 days
- If the Soviets were to interfere, it would be considered an act of war
- Stalin ended the siege in **May 1949**

Stalin, the Marshall Plan and the Truman Doctrine:

- The US feared that the European economy was weak and would fall to a Soviet expansion move
- To avoid this, the US in **1947 introduced the Marshall Aid Plan**
- The Plan offered large amounts of American capital to Europe to recover economically
- The Soviets condemned the plan as an act of American imperialism
- America aided in defence Greece and Turkey after a struggling Britain withdrew troops from there, fearing Soviet expansion
- US also stated that it was its duty *"to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressure."*
- Although they didn't explicitly name the USSR as an "outside pressure" that's what they meant
- The Soviets saw the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan (three months later) as linked
- The USSR saw this as America's way of politically and economically controlling Europe
- Had it been presented in the other way, they may have thought less of it
- The economic position of the USSR made the Marshall Plan a tempting offer but he could not allow himself or his Eastern Bloc to become financially dependent on the US

- The formation of **NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation) 1949** only further heightened Stalin's suspicious and distrust of the West in their newfound defence alliance
- The Soviets once again saw this as an act of American Imperialism
- These military alliances supported Stalin's earlier decisions in **1945 to create their own atomic weapon**

Stalin and the Korean War:

- The membership of the US and USSR in the UN intensified their disagreements
- This rivalry was particularly heightened over the situation in **China where the Communist Party came to power in 1949**
- The Nationalist who had been overthrown fled to the island of Taiwan
- The US recognised them and gave the military and economic assistance
- The USSR however demanded that Mao's China replace the Nationalists as the China on the UN council
- China was the base of the first major Cold War confrontation in **Korea 1950-53**
- After Japan was defeated in 1945, Korea was divided between the US South and the Soviet North
- In **1950 the North Koreans crossed the border** with the intention of making the whole country communist
- It was believed that Mao was in agreement with Stalin over this but he actually was unaware of the plan
- What most believed today is the Stalin convinced the North Korean leader that he was strong enough to overtake the whole country
- This would give Stalin a strong hold in the far east and believed that the US could not win such a conflict
- The USSR was helped by the **Moscow agreement in 1950 between the USSR and China**
- This agreement gave the Soviets access to rail links and naval stations in Manchuria
- Stalin stuffed up though when he decided not to attend the UN Security Council Meeting where it was decided to send UN forces into Korea
- Since the USSR was not there, it could not veto the decision
- However, the Soviet foreign minister later announced that the decision was a deliberate move by Stalin to draw the US into conflict
- In the end, the war was not how Stalin had hoped
- Soviet forces never actually took part in fighting (as Stalin intended) but Soviet weapons were involved
- The **war ended in a stalemate** and the **Panmunjom Amnesty left Korea divided**
- The war also did little for Soviet prestige as Stalin had hoped
- Mao would later claim that the war was fought by the North Korean and Chinese in defence of international Communism

Stalin's Foreign Policy in Perspective:

- "Complex in operation but simple in design"
- His aim was to protect his own countries interests in the face of international hostility
- He abandoned the idea of the USSR at the forefront of an international Marxist revolution but rather focused on national security
- Always fearful of a Western invasion, despite the Soviet's strengths
- His domestic and foreign policies were all tied to national defence and strengthening the nation
- Ironically, when the invasion he had always been fearing came, he refused to believe it and nearly destroyed all his achievements he had made up until 1941
- The military recovery, hurt their economic position but proved the USSR as a world powerhouse
- However, Stalin's sense of vulnerability did not waver
- The Cold War arose on Stalin's fears of being invaded again and his suspicious of the Western world
- Stalin **died in 1953** and left the USSR in an ideological battle with the capitalist West

Khrushchev

Rise to Power:

- After Stalin's death in March 1953, a collective leadership of four members emerged
- **Malenkov (Soviet Premier), Molotov (Foreign Secretary), Bulganin (Deputy Premier) and Khrushchev (Party Secretary)**
- It was initially feared that the leader of the secret police MVD would put in a bid for power
- The MVD were a strong force in Russia, but Khrushchev was able to balance this with the Red Army
- The Soviet Commander-in-Chief particularly liked Khrushchev which allowed him to enlist the support of the army
- Following Stalin's death was 'the thaw' the easing of tensions with less executions (the only one being the leader of the MVD, Beria)
- In this period it was also argued that there needed to be better relationships with the outside world
- It was suggested by Malenkov that efforts should be made into improving the living standards rather than continual focus on heavy industry
- He was outmanoeuvred however by Khrushchev who was stronger in personality (forceful and persuasive)
- Khrushchev was also in the best place politically to take power as he was essentially head of the party
- Over the next two years, Khrushchev undermined Malenkov's position using his influences
- He travelled around Russia and listened to the people, making connections with them
- He placed his nominees in positions of authority and established a power base
- **By 1955 he was undoubtedly the man to take over power**
- By 1956, Khrushchev felt he had the power to attack Stalin's character which shocked a lot of party members
- They all survived Stalin's brutality, even more so participating and benefitting from it
- Many struggled without Stalin and were frightened about the implications of Khrushchev's attack
- Under Khrushchev, many lost their current positions, changing the main purpose of the party, to provide jobs
- There were even plots from opposition to overthrow him in 1957
- Khrushchev however used his army and supporters to overrule any proposed decisions by the Politburo against him
- Leaders such as Molotov and Malenkov resigned after being criticized of forming an 'anti-Party Group'
- Khrushchev had to ensure now however, that the army would not become a threat, despite his strong connections
- He undermined the position of his supporter, Marshall Zhukov who was forced to retire and replaced by Malinovsky as the new Commander-in-Chief
- Bulganin was the only person left to remove now which Khrushchev did by forcing him to confess to being a part of the 'anti-Party Group'
- Khrushchev then appointed himself as the Premier and held the position of Prime Minister in government and First Secretary of the Party

De-Stalinisation:

- In destroying Stalin's reputation Khrushchev **released a 'secret report' on Feb. 1956** to the 12th Congress
- In the report which took an entire weekend to deliver, Khrushchev surveyed Stalin's career since 1930s
- It exploited in detail, the crimes and errors made by Stalin against the Party
- He was labelled as personally responsible for the Purges and names of innocent Party members were read out who had suffered under Stalin
- Mention was given to examples of individual cases of brutality and torture
- The report was interrupted frequently by members who were shocked or in disbelief about the terror
- It was **not publically reported to the USSR until 1989** but was leaked by members who had attended to the Western press

- The report was not limited to violence but Stalin's foreign policy miscalculations and ridicule of the notion of Stalin as a war hero
- Khrushchev pointed out his incompetence as an organiser and strategist
- Overall he described Stalinism as 'a cult of personality'
- He blamed the USSR's misfortunes since 1930s on Stalin's desire for personal power
- It should be noted that Khrushchev's **lists of pardons did not go back before 1934** and thus, names such as Trotsky's were absent
- The purpose of the speech through was to criticise Stalin, not the Communist Party
- Despite this, such an attack on a leader who had been held in such high regard, so soon after his death was like walking on a minefield as it could have undermined the Soviet Union the face international Communism
- De-Stalinisation had three main aims however:
 - To justify the introduction of progressive economic measures
 - To make co-existence with the West easier
 - To absolve Khrushchev as other leaders of Stalin's errors
- Criticism of Stalin was the only way to account for errors and failures of the Soviet system in post-Lenin era
- Khrushchev knew that since all the leaders had gotten to their positions under Stalin, none would have a clean record
- This guilt would prevent them from taking a swipe at his claims about Stalin
- Outside the USSR, people saw this as a move towards Soviet tolerance and freedom (NOT TRUE)
- Although a large number of prisoners were released at this time it was never intended to be an act of liberty
- Khrushchev did not denounce Stalin for terrorised the Soviets but rather his crimes were labelled as crimes against the party
- Khrushchev was merely placing the errors of the past on Stalin
- The party's authority and reputation was left untouched and the Party was free to make necessary reforms

De-Stalinisation and the Soviet Satellites:

- Yugoslavia successfully resisted Soviet domination post-war remaining Communist but independent
- As a part of his de-Stalinisation, Khrushchev stated that Stalin's lack of understanding towards the leader Tito, forced them to move away from the Eastern Bloc
- The other Eastern Bloc countries, saw Khrushchev attack on Stalin and the Yugoslav situation as an opportunity to seek greater independence for themselves
- This stirring for independence was felt particularly in Poland and Hungary
- The Polish in particular wanted freedom to develop their own socialism like Yugoslavia
- For the time being, a compromise was reached that allowed the exiled leader Gomulka to return
- The condition was he had to promise to outlaw Polish revisionism and renew his commitment to the **Warsaw Pact**
 - Warsaw Pact, 1955
 - An agreement where all Eastern Bloc countries committed themselves to collective defence of Soviet Europe against Western imperialism
 - It was seen as the benchmark for loyalty to the USSR
- The USSR's determination to hold its satellite states under Khrushchev was seen in Hungary in 1956
- The government was beginning to allow anti-Soviet demonstrations to continue
- Khrushchev decided enough was enough angered further by Western encouragement at the UN
- The Hungarian government, led by Nagy had also planned to withdraw Hungary from the Warsaw pact
- This is when the anticipated invasion with tanks rolling into Hungary and crushing any liberal movements
- It was situations like these were the Soviet felt threatened by satellite states or by the West that force was used
- De-Stalinisation was NOT an opportunity for the satellite states to gain extra independence

- In fact, post-Stalin USSR strengthened its hold over its satellites