



9

Edexcel - IGCSE (Grade 9-1)

STUDY GUIDE

Dictatorship and Conflict in the USSR, 1924-53



9

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Dictatorship and Conflict in the USSR, 1924–53

Edexcel - IGCSE



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HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

In this study guide, you will see a series of icons, highlighted words and page references. The key below will help you quickly establish what these mean and where to go for more information.

Icons



WHAT questions cover the key events and themes.



WHO questions cover the key people involved.



WHEN questions cover the timings of key events.



WHERE questions cover the locations of key moments.



WHY questions cover the reasons behind key events.



HOW questions take a closer look at the way in which events, situations and trends occur.



IMPORTANCE questions take a closer look at the significance of events, situations, and recurrent trends and themes.



DECISIONS questions take a closer look at choices made at events and situations during this era.

Highlighted words

Abdicate - occasionally, you will see certain words highlighted within an answer. This means that, if you need it, you'll find an explanation of the word or phrase in the glossary which starts on page 15.

Page references

Tudor (p.7) - occasionally, a certain subject within an answer is covered in more depth on a different page. If you'd like to learn more about it, you can go directly to the page indicated.

WHAT IS THIS BOOK ABOUT?

Dictatorship and conflict in the USSR, 1924-53 is the historical investigation that studies how and why Stalin transformed the USSR between 1924 and 1953. You will focus on crucial events during this period, and study the different social, cultural, political, economic, military and religious changes that occurred.

Purpose

This study will help you to understand the nature of dictatorship. You will investigate themes such as power, law and order, government, censorship, propaganda, art and culture, communism, dictatorship, economy and society. This course will enable you to develop the historical skills of analysing and evaluating historical interpretations. You will also develop the skills of explaining, analysing and making judgements about events. You will use the concepts of cause, consequences, change, continuity, similarity, difference and significance.

Topics

Dictatorship and conflict in the USSR, 1924-53 is split into 5 key enquiries:

- 🗒 Enquiry 1 looks at the leadership struggle between 1924 and 1929. You will study how and why Stalin succeeded in the leadership struggle after Lenin's death. You will investigate the reasons for Stalin's success and the failures of his rivals.
- 🗒 Enquiry 2 looks at Stalin's Five Year Plans and collectivisation. You will investigate the reasons for the introduction of the Five Year Plans, their aims, and their successes and failures. You will also study the policy of collectivisation; its causes, nature and consequences.
- 🗒 Enquiry 3 looks at purges, show trials, the cult of Stalin and the revision of history. You will study the reasons for the purges, what happened and the impact on the USSR, as well as the role of individuals involved. You will also investigate how Stalin used his cult of personality to control the people.
- 🗒 Enquiry 4 looks at life in the USSR between 1924 and 1941. You will study the effects of the government's policies on women, families and ethnic groups. You will explore the differences between the towns and the countryside.
- 🗒 Enquiry 5 looks at the Second World War and after, between 1941 and 1953. You will study how the USSR fared in the war and the significance of the Battle of Stalingrad. You will investigate the final years of Stalin in terms of the post-war purges, the Fourth Five Year Plan and the impact of his declining health on his power.

Key Individuals

Some of the key individuals studied on this course include:

- 👤 Joseph Stalin.
- 👤 Leon Trotsky.
- 👤 Nikolai Bukharin.
- 👤 Lev Kamenev.
- 👤 Grigory Zinoviev.
- 👤 Genrikh Yagoda.
- 👤 Nikolai Yezhov.

Key Events

Some of the key events you will study on this course include:

- 📅 The leadership struggle between 1924 and 1929.
- 📅 First Five Year Plan and collectivisation.
- 📅 Murder of Kirov.
- 📅 The Great Purge and the show trials.
- 📅 Nazi Germany invasion of the USSR in Operation Barbarossa.
- 📅 Socialist Realism in art and culture.
- 📅 Stalin's Great Retreat in education.

Assessment

Dictatorship and conflict in the USSR, 1924-53 forms part of paper 1 where you have a total of 1 hour and 30 minutes to complete. You should spend 45 minutes on this section of the paper. There will be 1 exam question on Dictatorship and conflict in the USSR, 1924-53. The question will be broken down into 4 sections; a, b, c(i) and c(ii). You will answer a, b and either c(i) or c(ii).

WHAT IS THIS BOOK ABOUT?

- 👤 Question a is worth 6 marks. This question will require you to examine an extract and assesses your ability to analyse and evaluate a historical interpretation. You will need to identify the author's opinion or perspective by analysing the language the author uses and what they have chosen to comment on. You will explain how valid the overall interpretation is by using your own knowledge to evaluate the interpretation.
- 👤 Question b is worth 6 marks. This question will require you to explain two effects of an event on something else by using your contextual knowledge and looking at the consequences. You will need to identify two effects and then demonstrate how the event led to the effect you have identified.
- 👤 Question c(i) and c(ii) are worth 16 marked. This question will require you to construct an argument to support and challenge an interpretation stated in the question. You will be given two pieces of information to help jog your memory but you must use information of your own. You will have the opportunity to show your ability to explain and analyse historical events using 2nd order concepts such as causation, consequence, change, continuity, similarity and difference.

Sample

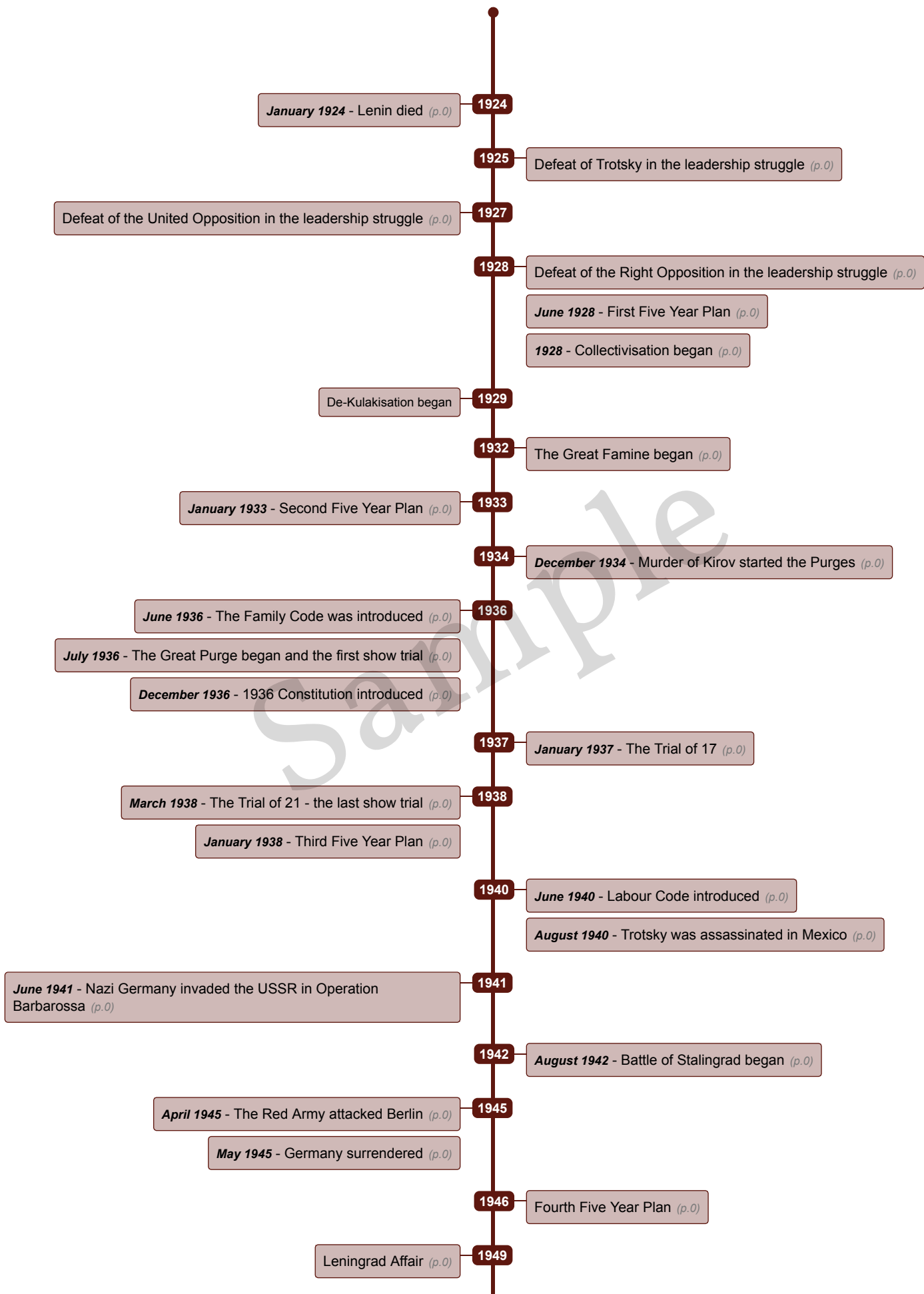


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Sample

DICTATORSHIP AND CONFLICT IN THE USSR, 1924 TO 1953

TIMELINE



1953

January 1953 - Doctor's Plot (p.0)

March 1953 - Death of Stalin (p.0)

Sample



CONTENDERS IN THE LEADERSHIP STRUGGLE, 1924-1929

There was no clear successor when Lenin died.

What were the strengths of the contenders in the leadership struggle in Russia?

The contenders in the struggle for the leadership of Russia all had their own unique strengths and weaknesses. Any of them could have succeeded Lenin.

What were the strengths of Stalin as a contender in the leadership struggle in Russia?

Stalin (p.o) had 6 main strengths:

- ✓ He was the general secretary of the party in 1922, which gave him a lot of power as he could control what was discussed in the Politburo meetings.
- ✓ He could appoint his supporters to key jobs because he was general secretary.
- ✓ He had access to 26,000 personal files which he could use against the other contenders.
- ✓ He launched the Lenin Enrolment programme from 1923 to 1925. This recruited over 500,000 largely uneducated and poor members who were loyal to him.
- ✓ Many members favoured his idea of **socialism** in one country, where they would concentrate on developing **communism** in the USSR rather than worldwide.
- ✓ Most of the leading **communists** underestimated Stalin (p.o) and viewed him as merely a capable administrator.

What were the weaknesses of Stalin as a contender in the leadership struggle in Russia?

Stalin (p.o) had 4 main weaknesses:

- ✓ Stalin (p.o) was harshly criticised by Lenin in his 'Testament'. If this became public knowledge it would undermine him.
- ✓ He had angered Lenin by being very rude to Lenin's wife, Krupskaya.
- ✓ He did not take part in the October Revolution.
- ✓ He was not popular or well-known in the party, considering his relatively high level of responsibility within it. He had been famously described as 'the grey blur' - a bureaucrat and administrator, rather than a charismatic leader.

What were Trotsky's strengths as a contender in the leadership struggle in Russia?

Trotsky had 4 main strengths:

- ✓ He played a significant role in the October Revolution, working closely with Lenin.
- ✓ He enabled the **communists** to win the civil war by creating the Red Army.
- ✓ He was a great speaker and organiser.
- ✓ He was popular with the younger and more **radical** members.

What were Trotsky's weaknesses as a contender in the leadership struggle in Russia?

Trotsky had 3 key weaknesses:

- ✓ He joined the Communist Party in 1917, so he was not seen as one of the 'Old Bolsheviks'.
- ✓ He was disliked by members of the party because he was Jewish and seen as arrogant and rude.
- ✓ Many members did not like his idea of worldwide **revolution** because it meant a continued struggle and possible war.

What were Kamenev's strengths as a contender in the leadership struggle in Russia?

Kamenev 2 main strengths were:

- ✓ He had joined the party in 1903, so he was seen as an 'Old Bolshevik'.
- ✓ He was the party secretary in Moscow, which gave him a power base.



What were Kamenev's weaknesses as a contender in the leadership struggle in Russia?

Kamenev's 2 key weaknesses were:

- ✓ He was seen as disloyal to Lenin because he had opposed Lenin's plans for the timing of the October Revolution.
- ✓ He was not really involved in the civil war.



What were Zinoviev's strengths as a leadership contender in Russia?

Zinoviev's 3 main strengths were:

- ✓ He had a strong party base because he was the party secretary in Leningrad.
- ✓ He was considered an 'Old Bolshevik' because he joined the party in 1903.
- ✓ He was a close friend of Lenin.



What were Zinoviev's weaknesses as a contender in the leadership contender in Russia?

Zinoviev's 3 key weaknesses were:

- ✓ He was seen as disloyal to Lenin because he had opposed Lenin's plans for the timing of the October Revolution.
- ✓ He was not heavily involved in the civil war.
- ✓ He was seen as ineffectual.



What were Bukharin's strengths as a contender for leadership in Russia?

Bukharin's 4 main strengths were:

- ✓ Lenin described him as the 'golden boy' of the Communist Party - he was very popular.
- ✓ He supported Lenin until his death.
- ✓ He played an important role in the Communist Party between 1925 and 1928.
- ✓ He was the editor of the **communist** newspaper, Pravda.



What were Bukharin's weaknesses as a contender in the leadership struggle in Russia?

Bukharin's 3 main weaknesses were:

- ✓ He had disagreed with Lenin over the ending of the First World War and the signing of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk.
- ✓ He supported the New Economic Policy, which made him unpopular with the party's **left wing**.
- ✓ He was seen as too young and inexperienced.



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Sample

GLOSSARY

A

Abolish, Abolished - to stop something, or get rid of it.

Agricultural - relating to agriculture.

Agriculture - an umbrella term to do with farming, growing crops or raising animals.

Allegiance - loyalty to a person, group or cause.

Alliance - a union between groups or countries that benefits each member.

Allies - parties working together for a common objective, such as countries involved in a war. In both world wars, 'Allies' refers to those countries on the side of Great Britain.

Ambassador - someone, often a diplomat, who represents their state, country or organisation in a different setting or place.

Assassinate - to murder someone, usually an important figure, often for religious or political reasons.

Assassination - the act of murdering someone, usually an important person.

Autonomy - independence or self-government.

B

Bolshevik, Bolsheviks - was a Russian radical Marxist revolutionary group, founded by Vladimir Lenin and Alexander Bogdanov in 1903. A Bolshevik is someone who is a member of that party.

Bribe, Bribery, Bribes - to dishonestly persuade someone to do something for you in return for money or other inducements.

C

Campaign - a political movement to get something changed; in military terms, it refers to a series of operations to achieve a goal.

Capitalism - the idea of goods and services being exchanged for money, private ownership of property and businesses, and acceptance of a hierarchical society.

Censorship - the control of information in the media by a government, whereby information considered obscene or unacceptable is suppressed.

Civilian - a non-military person.

Claim - someone's assertion of their right to something - for example, a claim to the throne.

Communal - referring to something that is shared by all members of a community, be it an action or possession etc.

Communism - the belief, based on the ideas of Karl Marx, that all people should be equal in society without government, money or private property. Everything is owned by the people, and each person receives according to need.

Communist - a believer in communism.

Conference - a formal meeting to discuss common issues of interest or concern.

Consolidate - to strengthen a position, often politically, by bringing several things together into a more effective whole.

Constitution - rules, laws or principles that set out how a country is governed.

Consumer goods - products that people buy.

Cooperate, Cooperation - to work together to achieve a common aim. Frequently used in relation to politics, economics or law.

Counter-attack - an attack made in response to one by an opponent.

Culture - the ideas, customs, and social behaviour of a particular people or society.

Currency - an umbrella term for any form of legal tender, but most commonly referring to money.

D

Decree - an official order with the force of law behind it.

Deploy - to move military troops or equipment into position or a place so they are ready for action.

Deport - to expel someone from a country and, usually, return them to their homeland.

Deportation - the act of deporting someone.

Deterrent - something that discourages an action or behaviour.

Dictator - a ruler with absolute power over a country, often acquired by force.

Dictatorship - a form of government where an individual or small group has total power, ruling without tolerance for other views or opposition.

Dictatorship of the Proletariat - the belief that, whilst the proletariat would eventually come to rule itself as proposed by Karl Marx, for now they were not ready, and required a 'dictator' to guide them until they were able to rule themselves.

Discriminate, Discrimination - to treat a person or group of people differently and in an unfair way.

E

Economic - relating to the economy; also used when justifying something in terms of profitability.

Economy - a country, state or region's position in terms of production and consumption of goods and services, and the supply of money.

Encircle, Encirclement - a military term for enemy forces isolating and surrounding their target.

Exile - to be banned from one's original country, usually as a punishment or for political reasons.

Export - to transport goods for sale to another country.

Extreme - furthest from the centre or any given point. If someone holds extreme views, they are not moderate and are considered radical.

F

Famine - a severe food shortage resulting in starvation and death, usually the result of bad harvests.

Front - in war, the area where fighting is taking place.

Full employment - when virtually everyone able and willing to work in a country has a job.

G

Gulag - a forced labour camp in the USSR.

H

Harvest - the process of gathering and collecting crops.

Heavy industry - the manufacture of large and/or heavy items in bulk, or industries which involve large and heavy equipment and/or facilities. Examples are the iron, coal, steel and electricity industries.

Hierarchies, Hierarchy - the ranking of people according to authority, for example a colonel in the army being higher than a corporal.

I

Ideology - a set of ideas and ideals, particularly around political ideas or economic policy, often shared by a group of people.

Illiterate - unable to read or write.

Independence, Independent - to be free of control, often meaning by another country, allowing the people of a nation the ability to govern themselves.

Indoctrinate, Indoctrination - to teach someone to accept a set of beliefs without reservation or question.

Industrial - related to industry, manufacturing and/or production.

Industrialisation, Industrialise, Industrialised - the process of developing industry in a country or region where previously there was little or none.

Industry - the part of the economy concerned with turning raw materials into manufactured goods, for example making furniture from wood.

Informant - someone who passes important information to another person or organisation, such as the police.

Infrastructure - the basic physical and organisational facilities a society or country needs to function, such as transport networks, communications and power.

K

Kulak - a richer peasant who had sufficient money to own land or a farm.

L

Left wing - used to describe political groups or individuals with

beliefs that are usually centered around socialism and the idea of reform.

Legislation - a term for laws when they are considered collectively, for example housing legislation.

Legitimacy, Legitimate - accepted by law or conforming to the rules; can be defended as valid.

Literate - someone who can read and write.

M

Manifesto - the stated policies or aims of a political party or person, normally published before an election.

Military force - the use of armed forces.

Mine - an explosive device usually hidden underground or underwater.

Moderate - someone who is not extreme.

Modernise - to update something to make it suitable for modern times, often by using modern equipment or modern ideas.

Morale - general mood of a group of people.

N

Nationalism, Nationalist, Nationalistic - identifying with your own nation and supporting its interests, often to the detriment or exclusion of other nations.

Nobility - the social class ranked directly below royalty.

O

Occupation - the action, state or period when somewhere is taken over and occupied by a military force.

Orthodox - to be normal or usual; to follow or conform to traditional or generally accepted rules or beliefs.

P

POW, Prisoner of war, Prisoners of war - somebody who has been captured and taken prisoner by enemy forces.

Peasant - a poor farmer.

Persecute - to treat someone unfairly because of their race, religion or political beliefs.

Persecution - hostility towards or harassment of someone, usually due to their race, religion or political beliefs.

Pilgrimage - journey undertaken to a sacred place, usually for religious or spiritual reasons.

Poll - a vote or survey.

Population - the number of people who live in a specified place.

Pragmatic - taking a practical approach; being sensible and realistic.

President - the elected head of state of a republic.

Prevent, Preventative, Preventive - steps taken to stop something from happening.

Printing press - a machine that reproduces writing and images by using ink on paper, making many identical copies.

Production - a term used to describe how much of something is made, for example saying a factory has a high production rate.

Profit - generally refers to financial gain; the amount of money made after deducting buying, operating or production costs.

Propaganda - biased information aimed at persuading people to think a certain way.

Purged, Purging - abrupt and often violent removal of a group of people from a place or organisation; medically, to make someone sick or induce diarrhoea as a treatment to rid them of illness.

R

Radical, Radicalism - people who want complete or extensive change, usually politically or socially.

Rationing - limiting goods that are in high demand and short supply.

Real wages - a person's income in terms of how much they can buy after taking inflation into account.

Reconstruction - a period in the USA from 1865-1877 where the southern states were reintegrated through a series of laws.

Republic - a state or country run by elected representatives and an elected/nominated president. There is no monarch.

Revolution - the forced overthrow of a government or social system by its own people.

Right wing - a political view with beliefs centred around nationalism and a desire for an authoritarian government opposed to communism.

S

Sabotage - to deliberately destroy, damage or obstruct, especially to gain a political or military advantage.

Sanitation - conditions relating to public health, such as the sewage system and drinking water supply.

Satellite state - a country under the control of another, such as countries under USSR control during the Cold War.

Scorched earth policy - a military strategy where the retreating forces destroy crops and other resources to prevent the advancing army from using them.

Siege - action by enemy forces to surround a place or building, cutting off access and supplies, with the aim of either destroying it, gaining entry, or starving the inhabitants out.

Socialism - a political and economic system where most resources, such as factories and businesses, are owned by the state or workers with the aim of achieving greater equality between rich and poor.

Socialist - one who believes in the principles of socialism.

Soviet - an elected workers' council at local, regional or national level in the former Soviet Union. It can also be a reference to the Soviet Union or the USSR.

Standard of living - level of wealth and goods available to an individual or group.

State, States - an area of land or a territory ruled by one government.

Strategy - a plan of action outlining how a goal will be achieved.

Strike - a refusal by employees to work as a form of protest, usually to bring about change in their working conditions. It puts pressure on their employer, who cannot run the business without workers.

Successor - someone who succeeds the previous person, such as a leader who takes over the role from the previous holder.

Suppress, Suppression - the use of force to stop something, such as a protest.

T

Tactic - a strategy or method of achieving a goal.

Territories, Territory - an area of land under the control of a ruler/country.

Trade unions - organised groups of workers who cooperate to make their lives better at work. For example, they might negotiate for better pay and then organise a strike if one is refused.

Treason - the crime of betraying one's country, often involving an attempt to overthrow the government or kill the monarch.

Tsar - the Russian word for emperor; can also be spelled 'czar'.

W

Western powers - a group term used to describe developed capitalist nations, such as Britain and the USA.

Working class - socio-economic group consisting of those engaged in waged labour, especially manual work or industry, who typically do not have much money.

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