

Hitler's nazi germany vs. stalin's communist russia



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KA. SONS Stalin's Communist Russia ?????????????????? ??????? ?????? Hitler's Nazi Germany Hitler's Nazi-Deutschland Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin are widely regarded as the greatest tyrants of the twentieth century, accountable for more violent deaths than any other leaders in history. Both have been individually and collectively labeled mass murders, tyrants, “authors of terror”, and even “twin demons of the twentieth century”. The shared political methodology of both dictators was heavily based around totalitarianism.

Their apparatus of power and repression led to absolute and ruthless authority over the population of their respective nations. The disparity in Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin's rise to power, economy, policies, totalitarian rule and methodology confirm who the greater oppressor was. Stalin and Hitler's individual means by which they came to power were both undertaken during a time of great instability in their countries. Both men took advantage of their nation state's pandemonium to seize power and acquire political support for their authoritarian views.

Adolf Hitler, the man who would become the dictator of Germany from 1933 to 1945 first developed his German nationalism in 1914 with the outbreak of the First World War. Volunteering to fight in the German Army, Hitler was recruited into a Bavarian regiment. Upon Germany's defeat, Hitler, as well as a number of nationalist and conservative groups blamed the new Weimar government, along with socialists and Jews for Germany's defeat. The signing of the armistice in November 1918 and the acceptance of the Treaty of Versailles in June 1919 deemed Germany responsible for causing the war and sought reparation.

Hitler however refused to acknowledge Germany's defeat. He claimed that the politician's signatory to the armistice agreement had sold out the German army. Hitler was determined in leading Germany out of their disparity and became heavily involved in politics during the following years. In February 1920, with the support from his army colleagues, Hitler became a prominent speaker and propaganda officer for the German Workers Party (DAP). Accordingly, Hitler had the DAP renamed the National Socialist Workers' Party (NSDAP or otherwise known as the Nazi Party) and was elected party chairman in July 1921.

In 1922, Germany was caught in the spiral of hyperinflation, which resulted in rapidly rising prices as currency lost its value. Consequently, many people went bankrupt or lost their savings. During Germany's instability, Hitler believed he could seize control of the Bavarian government and attempted to do so in the Munich Beer Hall Putsch, November 1923. His Putsch failed and Hitler was sentenced to five years in prison for high treason. Following his release, Hitler altered his plans and became focused upon gaining control through the democratic process.

Hitler's rise to power excelled on the back of the Great Depression, harnessing mass popular sentiment to take control incrementally of Germany. By 1930, the Nazi Party had over 100, 000 members and continued to significantly enhance their support by targeting particular groups of people: peasant farmers, small shopkeepers and the unemployed. Following a number of presidential elections in Reichstag (parliament), in 1932, the Nazi's increased their number of seats from 107 to 230 (37% of the vote), this made them the largest party in the Reichstag.

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Realising Hitler's power, President Von Hindenburg and other military men in the German Nationalist Party (DNVP) tried to bring Hitler under control by making him Chancellor on the 30th January 1933. Immediately after President Von Hindenburg's death on the 12th August 1934, Hitler proclaimed himself Fuhrer. Having gained mass support, Hitler assumed complete control of Germany and instantly set out upon eliminating his opposition through his military forces. Adolf Hitler's rise to power was legitimate in the sense that he attained power legally.

Joseph Stalin remains one of the few dictators in world history so greatly feared and reviled. As head of the USSR from 1929 to 1953, Stalin was responsible for the deaths of untold millions of Soviet citizens. Stalin's accession to power began in 1901 when he joined the Social Democratic Labour Party (SDLP). Following the next few years, Stalin was focused upon organising industrial resistance to Tsarism which consequently resulted in his arrest. Meanwhile, in 1903, a dispute between Vladimir Lenin and Julius Martov (the two leaders of the Social Democratic Labour Party) led to the split of the party. Stalin, managing to escape prison in Siberia sided with Lenin in the SDLP split. Accordingly, Stalin became a member of Lenin's faction, the Bolsheviks. Returning to Russia, Stalin was arrested four times over the next eight years but managed to escape each time. In 1911 he moved to St. Petersburg and became editor of Pravda (a newspaper) the following year. Arrested again in 1913, Stalin was exiled for life to North Siberia.

However, Stalin avoided prison yet again after the overthrow of Nicholas II whereby the new Prime Minister, Alexander Kerensky, allowed all political prisoners to return to their homes. Stalin went back to St. Petersburg and once again became one of the editors of Pravda. At this time, Stalin, like most Bolsheviks, took the view that the Russian people were not ready for a socialist revolution. When Lenin returned to Russia on the 3rd April 1917, he announced what became known as the April Theses. Lenin attacked Bolsheviks for supporting the Provisional Government.

Instead, he argued, revolutionaries should be telling the people of Russia that they should take over the control of the country. Lenin urged peasants to take the land from the rich landlords and the industrial workers to seize the factories. Responding to Lenin's call, Stalin wrote an article in Pravda dismissing the idea of working with the Provisional Government. He condemned Alexander Kerensky as a counter-revolutionary, and urged the peasants to takeover the land for themselves. In November, 1917, Lenin rewarded Stalin for his support of the October Revolution by appointing him Commissar of Nationalities.

Lenin's April Theses influenced the October Revolution in which the Provisional Government was overthrown and power was given to the local soviets dominated by Bolsheviks. In 1922, Lenin's firm belief that the Bolsheviks would do whatever was necessary for the sake of the revolution, led to him appointing Stalin as the General Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party (Bolsheviks). His position at this time enabled him to control the rank-and-file members, building an apparatus loyal to him. Aware of Stalin's growing power, Lenin had doubts about the appointment,

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although, before any change could be made, Lenin died on January 21st 1924.

Accordingly, Grigori Zinoviev and Lev Kamenev, high-ranked members of the Communist party, joined together with Stalin to form a triumvirate of successors allied in leading the party. However, the strongest contenders were Trotsky and Stalin. Lenin's second in command ever since the revolution had been Leon Trotsky, who like Lenin, had travelled widely in Europe working to spread communism. Trotsky had a firm belief in a worldwide Communist Revolution. On the contrary, Stalin believed on focusing efforts in their own country. The power struggle between the two men resulted in Stalin's scheming against Trotsky.

Gaining support from members in the executive committee, Stalin began to reduce Trotsky's responsibilities and titles and charged him with working against the Communist Party and had him exiled to Siberia and later banished from the Soviet Union. Stalin's further greed for control resulted in the elimination of Zinoviev and Kamenev from participation in the government. Stalin had removed all those who he deemed a threat to him from positions of power and as a result, became the sole leader of the Soviet Union in 1929. While sharing a common totalitarian complexion, the two systems were notably different in their policies and economy.

Both leaders, achieved a tremendous economic good for their respective countries, although, their tyrannical methodology used to achieve this good was brutal on a scale never seen before or since. Before 1933, the Nazi Party's economic policies (25-point programme) were based on racist

ideology and maintained an anti-capitalist element. Adolf Hitler couldn't manage Germany's economy and construct greater policies without gaining greater power, and was able to do so through the Enabling Act in March 1933. The proposed Enabling Bill would grant Hitler greater dictatorial powers.

The Act, which was passed without much opposition, granted the Cabinet the authority to enact laws without the participation of Reichstag. Now Fuhrer of Germany, unchallenged in his tyranny, Hitler developed the Nazi's plan for the economy in 1933. The plan consisted of three broad elements: to restart the economy and solve unemployment, isolation from the international economic system and the creation of a war economy. The basis of creating a "military economy" was for Germany to be able to prevail in war in the future. Unsatisfied with Germany's economic plan, Hitler had insisted on a faster expansion of military strength in 1936. As a result, the Four-Year Plan was implemented. Headed by Hermann Goring, this plan was designed to make Germany's economy and military forces ready to fight a war in four years time. In implementing all of these policies, Hitler built Germany into a developed state with two-thirds of its population working in industry and services. The accumulating force to be developed from Hitler's reign was deemed unstoppable. Under the reign of Stalin, Russia's political authority was exercised with absolute and centralised control from the government to influence the economy.

Unlike Germany, Russia was totalitarian before Stalin came to power, thus Stalin's powers were near unlimited. The economy of Russia was lacking in contrast with Western Europe. Devastated by three years of war, Russia

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suffered disastrous repercussions, particularly the peasants and industrial workers. In 1928, Stalin abandons the New Economic Policy (NEP) originally proposed by Lenin, and introduces the Five Year Plan. Launched eight years prior to Hitler's Four Year Plan, Stalin's plan had two main aims: to boost the economy of the USSR, and to eradicate private enterprise, which would give the government greater control over all citizens.

In initiating the plan, a new programme of collectivisation was undertaken. Collectivisation involved the combining of thousands of small privately owned farms to create large collective farms run directly by the state. By 1938, all cultivated land was farmed collectively. However, this change was resisted by the kulaks (a category of affluent peasants). Rather than collectively farming, the kulaks burned their crops and slaughtered livestock. Responding to the kulaks disobedience, Stalin exercised brutal force and announced a policy of "eliminating the kulaks as a class".

The kulaks refusal to collectivisation led to the murder of five million peasants. An estimated ten to fifteen million more died in the famine of 1932 - 1934 and millions more disappeared. In implementing all of these policies, Stalin's ultimate aim was to transform Russia into a modern industrial power. The tyranny of each dictator resulted in the political repression and persecution of groups within their nation. In their reign, Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin were both men of authority who subjected others to undue pressures.

In Stalin's era, one such occurrence comprised of dominance and violence, which excellently captures Stalin's conviction, was the Great Purge.

The Great Purge was a campaign in the Soviet Union coordinated by Stalin himself from 1936 to 1938. The purges were instigated after the murder of Sergei Kirov, a prominent Bolshevik leader. The hunt for those responsible led by the secret police, the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs (NKVD) had uncovered a widespread network of plots. Over the next four years, Stalin's suspected enemies were imprisoned, sent to labour camps or executed.

Show trials were staged for some of the suspects in order to justify the purges. The defendants in these trials were accused of long-standing treachery to the Party, the Soviet Union and Stalin. Most of the accused were tricked, threatened or tortured into confession. Those who were accused were usually leading Communist Party members, almost anyone who played a leading role in the overthrow of the Provisional Government in 1917. Furthermore, top officers in the Red Army were accused of spying for Nazi Germany, and even members of the secret police were charged with treason.

The Great Purge characterised Stalin as a tyrant and exemplify his dictatorship as one based on savage criminality. Standing alongside the Great Purge in its malicious nature was the Night of the Long Knives. The Night of the Long Knives was a purge in Nazi Germany between June 30 and July 2 1934. Adolf Hitler, maintaining complete control of Germany, constantly feared he might be overthrown by a resistance who sought after his power. One such person who Hitler deemed a threat to himself was Ernst Rohm, leader of the SA. The SA's force of over three million men could easily dominate the German Army.

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To ensure he maintained his power and was not overthrown, Hitler accompanied by the SS arrested Rohm personally. Throughout the following twenty-four hours, two hundred senior SA officers were arrested, most of which were consequently shot upon capture. As a direct result of eradicating the SA, a new secret police force, much in similarity to Stalin's NKVD, was developed. Known as Gestapo, this secret police force headed by Heinrich Himmler was responsible for numerous counts of aggression and violence against communists, Jews and political enemies of Nazi Germany. The Night of the Long Knives and the

Gestapo however were not the only malicious acts and forces orchestrated by Hitler and his men against Germany. The Final Solution, responsible for the most deadly phase of the Holocaust causing the death of six million Jewish men, women and children was a direct result of Hitler's actions. In their totalitarian reign, Hitler and Stalin were parallel to one another in respect to their use of terrorism to enforce their will on the people of their individual countries. Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin each had problems plaguing their countries. Their individual attempts to resolve these problems led to severe domination and abuse of power.

Hitler despised the Jewish population as he believed they were responsible for weakening Germany. His response was an attempt to wipe out the entire race through genocide. Stalin saw capitalism as the great enemy, blaming it when his Five Year Plan to increase Russia's productivity faltered. In attaining a great deal of power, Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin were both blindly led into the absolute tyranny of their nation states, consequential to

mass killings. Hitler and Stalin's dictatorships were models of totalitarian rule, a common moral depravity, equally guilty of unspeakable crimes.

Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin's rise to power, economy, policies, totalitarian rule and methodology bear countless similarities and lack greater disparity. Stalin was as ruthless a dictator as Hitler was evil. Stalin's tyrannical obsession was due to his paranoia in which he disposed of anyone deemed a threat. Hitler's evil ambitions were concentrated upon the systematic genocide of the Jewish population and anyone else who he opposed. In response to my hypothesis, I warrant Joseph Stalin the greater oppressor of the two for subjecting a far greater number of his own countrymen to an enduring repression.

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