

The Great Terror:

It is important to remember that the terror is not something that Stalin started.

From NEP and onward criticism towards the secret police comes from within the party, Bucharin sends letters to Felix Dzerzjinskij were he is concerned with the growing terror. The leader of NKVD Felix Dzerzjinskij, a close allied of Stalin, defends the growing Secret Police.

Personnel with the Tjekan (later NKVD and GPU)

	1921	1925
Civilians/informants	105 000	30 000
Military	180 000	63 000
Civil servants		26 000

From 1924 we have a source telling us what the GPU were doing that year, jut to give you the idea of what kind of things they were dealing with before Stalin was completely in power:

What the GPU did?	Number of people arrested or checked (part of them sent to Working Camp):	Number of people killed:
Arrested “bandits”	11 453	1 858
Arrested foreigners and spies	2 468 (357 were thrown out of the country) (1542 spies)	?
Cleansing of White Guard in 81 operations	?	132
Liquidation of Menshevik and socialist revolutionary groups	6262	?
Expelling thieves and NEP-men	4500	?
Taking under individual supervision of “socially dangerous individuals”.	18 200	
Supervised corporations and governmental organizations	15 501	?
Read letters	5 078 174	
Total:	5 136 558 persons	1990 persons

In the penal code of 1926 the crime “socially dangerous person” included anyone who indirect supported an antirevolutionary activity. Even if you had done nothing to promote a counterrevolution if you did something that could be suspected as something that a criminal could do you were punished.

When in 1928 Stalin decided to start his Five Year Plan he needed to collectivize the farms:

- Had he allowed the farmers to produce for their own benefits the industrialization would have failed.
- This since he needed two basic things to make the heavy industrialization:
 - Labor
 - Food to the population.

- Stalin's way to get this was:
 - Force a radical efficiency on the farmers, fewer farmers should produce more.
 - The farmers not needed in the agricultural sector should be moved into the industrial sector, by force.
 - Use slave labor and Work Camps
- Stalin used the counterrevolutionaries as an excuse to enlarge the Working Camps, saying it was a Correctional Punishment for the socially dangerous.

Immediately Stalin's plans run into problems. As early as November 1927 there is a huge drop in food delivered from the farms to the "collecting stations". In January 1928 despite a very good harvest, production has dropped from 6,8 tons to 4,8 tons. Stalin answers with higher prices (the profit goes to the State, not the farmers), which upsets both workers and farmers.

Stalin's answer is Dekulakization. Kulaks being equal to all "rich farmers". The Right wing of the party (Kamenev, Rykov and Bucharin) warn Stalin against these actions, saying this will lead to the exact same situation as during War Communism.

Stalin thinks that the only way for the "Revolution" (or him) to survive is to ones and for all get full control over the production in the countryside. Seeing things from his point of view you have to give him right in this analysis, only if the Communist could defeat the farmers and get full control over that sector of the society could he stay in power. He rages a war against the "rich farmers", the Kulaks. This war will cost millions of people their lives.

Another problem he faces is how to manage the technicalities of the industrialization. He needs good engineers, economists etc to make this huge enterprise float. The Communists had so far looked the other way concerning the civil servants that had worked for the Czar and kept their jobs within the communist bureaucracy, many of them had been the brains behind NEP and the small improvement that had led to. For Stalin things were not that easy, he had outmaneuvered the Right Wing, condemning the NEP as a capitalistic policy, and could not back down again.

What he does is that he accuses them of every thing that goes bad, punishing them with force labor. In all its evil this is brilliant. He gets rid of his strongest critics, he has someone to blame and he gets their knowledge for free.. Stalin replaces these people with his own revolutionary working force.

The country is now run by Stalin, he sets up quotas that the middle men should live up to, if they fail, then they will be replaced, taken away to a camp or shot, and someone a little more revolutionary will have a try at it.

Stalin's war against the peasants is one of the worst crimes against human kind we have yet seen in the world: 2 million (during 1930 and 1931 1,8 million) farmers deported to working camps and at least 6 million dead. And the Great Terror has just started.