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## Joseph Stalin – The Father Of The USSR

The country has a lot of conflict and needed someone to lead them but for Russia that leader became Joseph Stalin. When Stalin when into power he aimed to make Russia a strong communist country. He felt as if Russia needs to become more industrial because they were falling a century behind all the other advanced countries. As heavy industry was being developed, agriculture was to be collectivized as a part of achieving Stalin's goal to make Russia a stronger state. Collectivization meant eliminating individual farms, and placing them in government control. After WW1, Russia was extremely unstable. They had retreated from the war before the allies were victorious. They had lost land and their military was weaker than it already had been. That is until Stalin made the Soviet Union involved in international affairs. They were victorious against the German oppression and they had also joined the League of Nations under Stalin's control. When Stalin was in power, there was no doubt that millions of innocent people had died through his strategies of making Russia more powerful. But in spite of his cruel methods, Joseph Stalin deserves the title of the 'Father of the USSR', for industrializing the country, collectivizing its agriculture and making the Soviet Union more active in international affairs.

In 1928, one of Stalin's goals was to rapidly develop a heavy industry. Stalin wanted to make the Soviet Union an industrial fortress and a strong nationalistic state. He figured to make Russian communism succeed industrial power was immediately needed. This was to be achieved by creating a command economy, which had meant that the industry was being forced to industrialize. Lenin had previously destroyed the power of private businesses to create a manageable industry. Therefore, when Stalin came into power, most of the major industries were already in government hands. Stalin had stated that stated that the Soviet Union was behind advanced societies, and that they had to industrialize quickly before 'enemies' would crush them. Heavy industry was essential for defense and for supplying agricultural tractors and combines. Stalin had believed that equality and democracy had to wait until the Soviet Union had a thriving industrial economy. In 1928, Stalin replaced Lenin's New Economic Policy (NEP) by the first Five-Year Plan. Where within a five-year period, each business was given a target that it must reach. The punishments for failing to meet the target were extremely severe. Many people were forced to work against their own will but Stalin felt that the policy was essential. The first three Five-year Plan from 1928 to 1941 increased production about 400%. By the mid-1930s Russia had surpassed the 1913 production figures of iron, coal and oil. There was no country ever known to industrialize so quickly. As a result, unemployment had been abolished. As Stalin was industrializing the country, he felt it was necessary to collectivize the farms of the country.

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As heavy industry developed, agriculture was to be collectivized. In 1929, collectivization began. There would be no more individual farms, and no more individual farmers selling their goods independently. The farmers were required to hand over a certain amount of produce to the state each year. The young, large-scale, socialized agriculture, growing now even faster than big industry, had a great future and could show miracles of growth. Collectivization was mainly directed against the kulaks, which were the rich peasants who owned their own land. Basically, Stalin would take land from the people who had owned it since 1861. Many peasants were forced to work for the state as a part of a collective commune. Some peasants and many kulaks resisted collectivization. They slaughtered their own cattle rather than to turn it over to the government. As a result, they were killed or sent to labor camps called the 'gulags'. By 1934, 70% of all the farms in Russia were collectivized and the kulaks were eliminated as a class. On the collective farms, peasants would be paid wages in return for handing over the produce to the government.

Under Stalin's power, the Soviet Union became more involved in international affairs. During the WW1, Russia did not play a major role in the Great War. They didn't have a strong military and their economy was weak. Even in the past, Russia was not active in international affairs as they were under Stalin's control. In 1934, the Soviet Union joined the League of Nations and made diplomatic agreements. This made Russia's defense stronger than the German oppression. Before WW2, both the axis powers and the democracies realized that the balance of power in Europe depended of which side Russia joined. If they joined Britain and France, Hitler would be forced to fight a two-front war. Both sides entered negotiations with Russia, but Stalin and communist Russia had been distrusted by both sides in the past. On August 23, 1939, Stalin and Hitler signed a non-aggression treaty. This Nazi-Soviet pact was shocking to all countries, but Russia had stated that it was for national self-interest only. Stalin wished to avoid war until, at least Russia was prepared. But later, Stalin was aware that Germany might eventually attack his country. On June 1941, German troops invaded Russia. Hitler's invasion on Russia, convinced the Soviet Union to join the 'Grand Alliance', which consisted of only Great Britain and the United States. Then later 26 other nations signed the Atlantic Charter, which was the beginning of the formation of the United Nations. By February 1943, Russia successfully stopped the German advance, which had attacked Stalingrad. Russia's military, as a result, became stronger.

Therefore, although people had died through Stalin's cruel methods of making Russia powerful, he deserves the title of the 'Father of the USSR', because he successfully industrialized the country, collectivized the farms and made the Soviet Union more active in international affairs. Within ten years, a primarily feudal country changed into an industrialized one. He also collectivized the farms for the good of the people as a whole. He led Russia into gaining more victories for the country by becoming more involved in worldwide affairs. Like a father, he guided his child, the USSR, to become stronger and more powerful among others. By setting

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crucial goals for the country, the Soviet Union became stronger than it was before Stalin was in power. The only question that concerns many is, were there any other alternatives of achieving his goals, without killing millions?

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