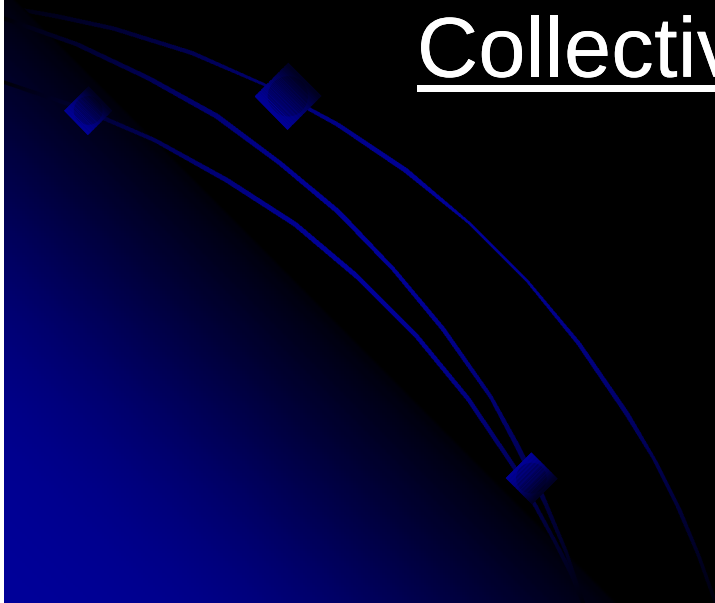


The USSR Under Stalin

Collectivization of Agriculture





A. Background

- NEP was not entirely successful, agriculture still below 1913 level
- small-holdings not efficient
- landless peasants liked to join state farms, the wealthier land-owning farmers did not want to give theirs up!
- the idea was to collectivize the farms into larger, more efficient state-run farms, and requisition the grain for redistribution (GF p. 77)

- In 1928 , Stalin said:
"Agriculture is developing slowly,
comrades. This is because we have
about 25 million individually owned
farms. They are the most primitive
and undeveloped form of economy
We must do our utmost to develop
large farms and to convert them into
grain factories for the country
organized on a modern scientific
basis."



B. The Concept

- economy of scale and mechanization would increase yields
 - feeding the cities and large number of workers who worked in new factories
- Peasants to pool resources and farm collectively on state-owned farm collectives

- There were two types of farms under collectivization:

- State Farm

- agricultural factory operated by peasant labour working for wages
- losses were borne by state

- Collective farm

- rewarded labour for its input
- tax paid by state
- overhead covered by earnings
- surplus divided on how much labour provided by worker
- collective workers could have small private plots for personal or family use

C. The Reality

- collectivization was forced on peasants
- Kulaks" owned property worth at least \$800 and used hired labour for at least 50 days , fought against this move
 - Kulaks (amounted to 5% of farmers) were deemed unfit for collectivization
- To demonstrate his authority Stalin launches a "war on the Kulaks", the richer peasants who owned some property
 - about 10 million peasant land holders were killed in this process – a forced famine to punish resisters



"Comrade, come and join the kolkhoz!"



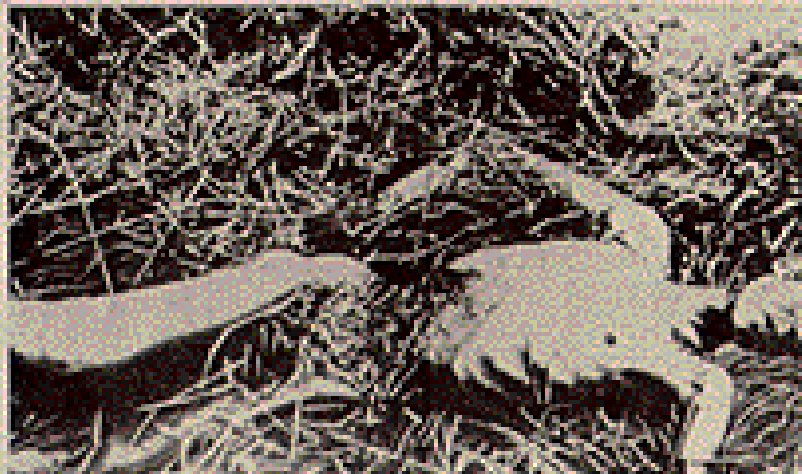
(1929): The Poster Reads "On our collective there is no room for priests or kulaks"

- Kulaks were forced out of Ukraine (Russia's bread basket) into barren areas of Siberia and Central Asia and
 - about 5 million "disappeared"
- between 1929-1933, peasants resisted by slaughtering livestock
 - > 50 % of all horses, cattle, sheep, goats, hogs, etc so state could not take them
- some Kulaks burn down their own farms rather than surrendering them to the state
- Kulaks revolted, killed livestock, refused to farm, widespread starvation - millions died (see quote on Howarth p. 131)

DELIBERATE STARVATION OF PEASANTS



This typical peasant of the Ukraine spent two years in suffering without respite, and when his release was at hand starvation.



This corpse is that of the father of the boy pictured at the right. The orphaned child was unable even to bury his father. There were no doctors in the village where the

boy lived at the right, and the boy could only cover the body with straw. (All photos copyright, 1933, by Agence France Presse, Inc.)

Villages Depopulated by Hunger in Ukraine as Soviet Punish Their Opponents

STARVATION rages through the Ukraine because of Soviet Russia, leaving a ghastly trail of death and agony. The Ukraine is the most fertile grain-producing district in Russia.

The facts contained in the series of articles, all which are in the "New York Herald Tribune," written by

BY THOMAS WALKER,

Special Investigator, President and Director of Russian Affairs, of the New York Herald Tribune, showing the horror of Soviet Russia.

American newspaper man, now resident in London, in the past of the life.

When Mr. Walker arrived in Russia last Spring he brought in a picture.

While photographing these and other articles were obtained under the most adverse and dangerous conditions. The pictures show scenes of mass starvation.



This Ukrainian boy is a victim of starvation. He died last winter from lack of food, and is the only survivor of his family because his parents were killed.

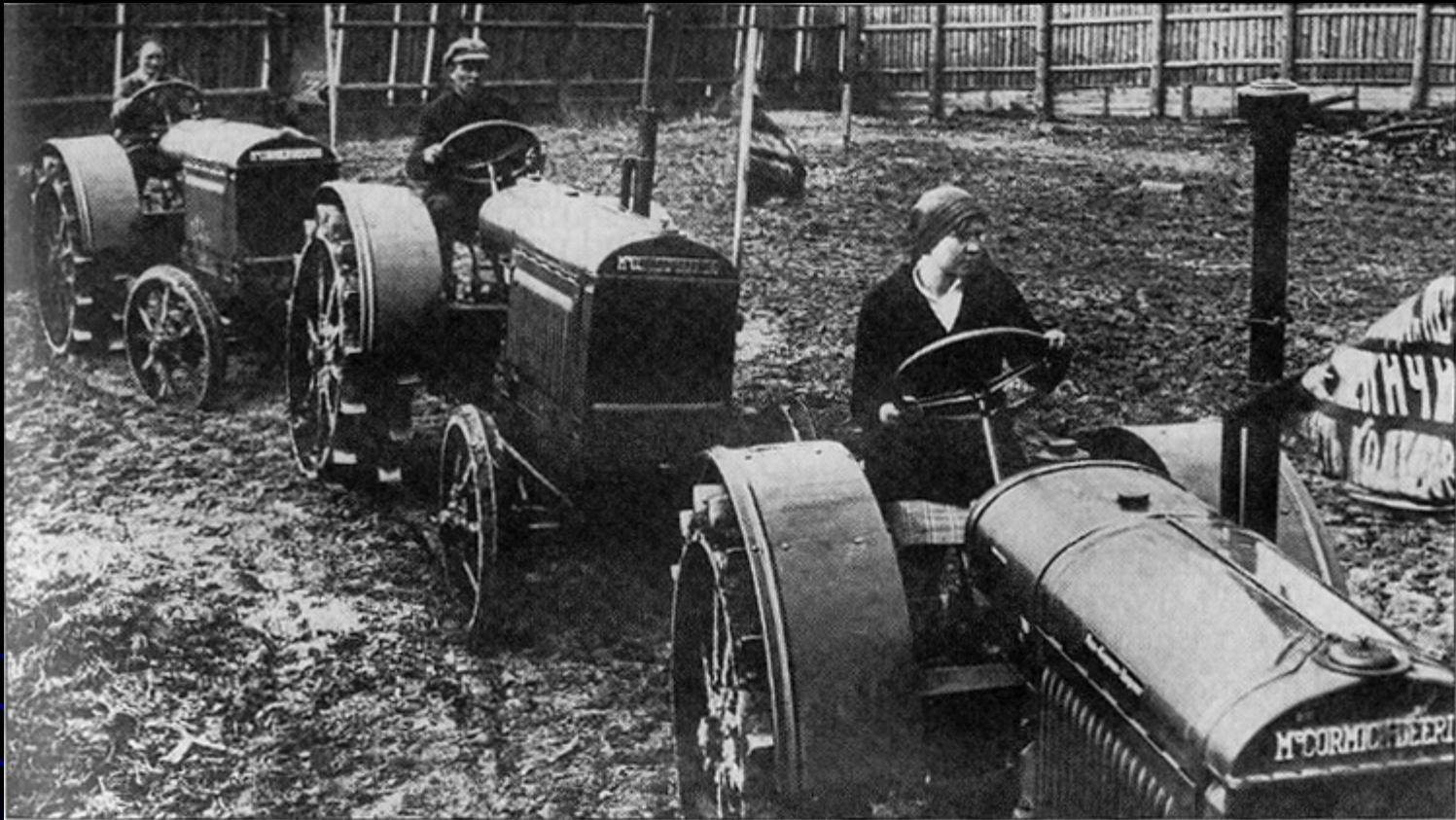
- droughts during 1931 and 1932 caused further famines and more millions died
- Landless peasants (about 75% of peasants) turned Kulaks in for grain hording, and seized their land
- (In rare candid behavior, Stalin admitted to Winston Churchill during WWII that the forced famine of 1932-33 killed about 10million but these numbers could have been higher! See Global Forces p. 78-79 for details)



The banner reads "We, kolkhoz farmers, are liquidating the kulaks as a class, on the basis of complete collectivization."

D. Was it a “Success”?

- What did 10million+ lives buy for Stalin?
- By 1937, 90% of farms were collectivized
 - Grain Production:
 - 1928 – 73 million tons
 - 1931 – 69.5 million tons
 - 1937 – 97 million tons
- Production of Tractors During the Five Year Plans:
 - 1930 – 25,000
 - 1933 – 200,000
- But livestock production did not return to 1913 levels until 1953



Men and women drive tractors out of one of the Soviet Union's Machine Tractor Stations to work fields where mechanization had been a rare sight. • Karl Liebkecht/Sovfoto