

CHAPTER
28
SECTION 4

Section Summary

THE SOVIET UNION UNDER STALIN

READING CHECK

What is a command economy?

VOCABULARY STRATEGY

What does the word *conform* mean in the underlined sentence? Circle the letter of the word set below that contains words you could substitute for *to conform*. Use the correct word set and context clues to help you figure out what *conform* means.

- a. to go along with
- b. to disagree with

READING SKILL

Identify Main Ideas Reread the last paragraph in the Summary. Write a sentence that expresses the main idea of that paragraph.

Under Joseph Stalin, the Soviet Union grew into a totalitarian state, controlling all aspects of life, including agriculture, culture, art, and religion. The state also developed a **command economy**, in which it made all economic decisions. Stalin's five-year plans set high production goals. Despite great progress in some sectors, products such as clothing, cars, and refrigerators were scarce. Stalin forced changes in agriculture, too. He wanted peasants to farm on either state-owned farms or **collectives**, large farms owned and operated by groups of peasants. Some peasants balked. Stalin believed that the **kulaks** were behind the resistance. He took their land and sent them to labor camps, where many died. In 1932, Stalin's policies led to a famine that caused millions to starve.

The ruling Communist party used secret police, torture, and bloody purges to force people to obey. Those who opposed Stalin were rounded up and sent to the **Gulag**, a system of brutal labor camps. Fearing that rival party leaders were plotting against him, Stalin launched the Great Purge in 1934. Among the victims of this and other purges were some of the brightest and most talented people in the country.

Stalin demanded that artists and writers create works in a style called **socialist realism**. If they refused to conform to government expectations, they faced persecution. Another way Stalin controlled cultural life was to promote **russification**. The goal was to force people of non-Russian nationalities to become more Russian. The official Communist party belief in **atheism** led to the cruel treatment of religious leaders.

The Communists destroyed the old social order. Instead of creating a society of equals, Communist party members became the heads of society. Still, under communism most people enjoyed free medical care, day care for children, cheaper housing, and public recreation. Women had equal rights by law.

Soviet leaders had two foreign policy goals. They hoped to spread world revolution through the **Comintern**, or Communist International. At the same time, they wanted to ensure their nation's security by winning the support of other countries. These contradictory goals caused Western powers to mistrust the Soviet Union.

Review Questions

1. How did Stalin's changes in agriculture lead to a famine?

2. How did the Communist party and Stalin force people to obey?
