



Source 3

Extracts on the success of the first Five Year Plan, from a summary of a speech given by Stalin on 7 January 1933

(Catalogue ref: FO 371/17254)

Questions

1. According to Stalin, what have been the successes of the first Five Year Plan?
2. Why did they move forward with the Plan so quickly?
3. How was the second Five Year Plan different to the first one?
4. How could you, as a historian, find out if Stalin's claims are true?
5. What conclusions about the success of the Five Year Plans can you draw from this source?
6. Stalin spoke at the assembly of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and the speech was published in the Communist newspaper Pravda a few days later. What do you think was the purpose of the speech?
7. The Foreign Office in Britain had this English summary of the speech by 12 January 1933. Why do you think they were so keen to know how Stalin's Plans were working?



HEROES & VILLAINS

Stalin & industrialisation > Was this a success?

Source 3

Stalin then turned to the question of the actual industrial achievements of the plan and gave a list (which is familiar and not, therefore, worth quoting) of the various industries which, he said, had been founded or transformed and illustrated the success of the plan in this sphere of national economy. Not only had these industries been created, but, compared, with the rate of their development, the standards of European industry were insignificant. The industrial transformation of the country had also led to the complete suppression of capitalist elements in industry. Meanwhile, the rôle played by industrial production in comparison with agricultural production had increased from a proportion of 48 per cent. of the whole output of national economy in 1928 to 70 per cent. in 1932.

As a whole, the industrial plan had been fulfilled by 93·7 per cent. and the volume of the industrial production was now three times what it had been before the war and twice what it had been in 1928.

The party, as it were, spurred on the country, accelerating its forward pace." It was necessary to drive on a country which was a hundred years backward, especially since it was impossible to tell "on what day the Imperialists would fall upon the U.S.S.R. and destroy its constructive development." Contemporary conditions, the growth of armaments in capitalist countries, the collapse of the idea of disarmament, the hatred of the international *bourgeoisie* for the U.S.S.R., all these factors had compelled the party to press forward the strengthening of the country's capacity for defence. It had been possible for the party to aim at the maximum *tempo* of development, first of all, because it was working on the basis of old factories and enterprises with which the workers were well acquainted, but could it be said, added Stalin, that such a policy of securing the maximum *tempo* of development would be followed in the second Five-Year Plan? No, this could not be said. In the first place, the success of the first Five-Year Plan had created a basis for the up-to-date development of industry, transport and agriculture. There was therefore no longer any need to whip up and spur the country forward.