Choices Under Control

Domestic policy in Stalin's Soviet Union

TOT.C.8.2 "Describe the domestic policies of interwar Soviet Russia, including the destruction of individual rights government seizure of privately owned industry and commerce internal passports to control people's movements state-mandated atheism..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline policies that changed people's daily lives, circle the groups affected, and number three places where the passage explains a harmful result. Use your marks to describe how the policies worked.

How the State Reached into Daily Life

1 In 1928, a Soviet shopkeeper could no longer assume a small business would remain private. Under Joseph Stalin, the government pushed rapid industrialization and took tighter control of factories, trade, and supplies. Officials ordered peasants onto collective farms and seized grain for cities and exports. During *dekulakization*, authorities labeled many peasants "kulaks," confiscated their property, and deported or killed them. In Soviet Ukraine, grain seizures and restrictions on travel helped cause the Holodomor, a deliberately imposed famine in 1932–1933 that killed millions. These policies made economic choices matters of state command, often at devastating human cost.

2 State control reached far beyond farms and factories. An internal passport system introduced in 1932 recorded where many urban residents lived and limited where they could move; most collective farm workers were denied passports. The government promoted atheism, closed places of worship, and arrested or executed some priests, while believers faced harassment. People who criticized leaders could lose their jobs or freedom. These restrictions destroyed individual rights that might have protected movement, religion, and speech. Even ordinary decisions, such as leaving a village or attending a religious service, could bring a person into conflict with the state.

3 Posters and newspapers praised Stalin as a wise, almost flawless leader, building a cult of personality. Meanwhile, the political police, including the NKVD, expanded surveillance and counterintelligence efforts against supposed enemies. In the Great Terror of the late 1930s, officials arrested citizens on accusations that were often false; many were executed or sent to the GULAG, a network of forced labor camps. Stalin also purged the military officer corps, imprisoning or executing many commanders. Public praise and private fear worked together: the state claimed loyalty while making dissent dangerous, even for people who had served it.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Describe two economic policies that shifted control away from private owners or farmers.

2. How did internal passports and state policies toward religion limit different individual rights?

3. Explain how dekulakization and the Holodomor harmed peasants in different ways.

4. How did Stalin's cult of personality and the political police work together to strengthen his rule?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write an 80 to 100 word museum label titled “One Family, Many Controls.” Imagine how three policies from at least two passage paragraphs could affect a Soviet family's choices about work, travel, faith, or speech during the 1930s, and explain how those effects could reinforce one another.

ANSWER KEY

Choices Under Control

HIGH SCHOOL · TOT.C.8.2

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline policies that changed people's daily lives, circle the groups affected, and number three places where the passage explains a harmful result. Use your marks to describe how the policies worked. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Describe two economic policies that shifted control away from private owners or farmers.	**The government took tighter control of factories and trade. It also ordered peasants onto collective farms and seized grain.**
2	How did internal passports and state policies toward religion limit different individual rights?	**Passports limited movement, and most collective farm workers were denied them. State atheism, closed places of worship, and persecution of priests and believers limited religious freedom.**
3	Explain how dekulakization and the Holodomor harmed peasants in different ways.	**During dekulakization, authorities confiscated peasants' property and deported or killed them. In Soviet Ukraine, grain seizures and travel restrictions helped cause a deliberately imposed famine that killed millions.**
4	How did Stalin's cult of personality and the political police work together to strengthen his rule?	**Public praise presented Stalin as a wise leader, while surveillance, arrests, executions, and forced labor made dissent dangerous.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

One Family, Many Controls: A family on a collective farm might have little say in what it grew because officials ordered farming and seized grain. If family members tried to leave, the lack of passports for most collective farm workers could block their travel. They might also avoid worship because believers faced harassment and priests were arrested. Speaking out about these pressures could attract the attention of the political police. Together, control of farming, movement, religion, and speech narrowed the family's choices while making it harder to resist any one policy.

Accept other passage-supported policies and effects. The museum label should connect at least three policies from at least two paragraphs and explain how their effects reinforced one another.