THE EVOLUTION OF THE ROLE OF TERROR IN COMMUNIST STATES

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This thesis attempts to answer the question of how the use of terror evolved over time in Communist states. To address this question, the model by Dallin and Breslauer dividing the use of terror into historical stages of Takeover, Mobilization, and Post-Mobilization was tested. It was examined using the cases of the Soviet Union and Communist China, and determining how well the evolution of the role of terror in those states fit the model.

The examination of the model revealed some problems, including a lack of difference between some parts of the Takeover Stage and the Mobilization Stage, and a lack of complete movement away from the use of terror in the Post-Mobilization stage. However, despite these problems with the model, it holds up to be mostly accurate at analyzing the evolution of the use of terror in Communist states. This thesis’ support of the model furthers the understanding of the classification of terror in post-revolutionary regimes and increases understanding of the motivations behind terror in Communist states.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXPLANATION OF MODEL BEING TESTED</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESEARCH STRATEGY</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>METHODS AND TOOLS OF STATE-SPONSORED TERROR</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE TAKEOVER STAGE IN THE SOVIET UNION</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE TAKEOVER STAGE IN COMMUNIST CHINA</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES IN TAKEOVER STAGES</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE MOBILIZATION STAGE IN THE SOVIET UNION</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE MOBILIZATION STAGE IN COMMUNIST CHINA</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES IN MOBILIZATION STAGES</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE POST-MOBILIZATION STAGE IN THE SOVIET UNION</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE POST-MOBILIZATION STAGE IN COMMUNIST CHINA</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES IN THE POST-MOBILIZATION STAGE</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCLUSION</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction

The study of the early stages of Communist rule shows a consistent reliance on the use of violence and terror on the domestic population by the ruling elite of the Communist parties. The extent of these campaigns of terror may never be known due to a lack of consistent record keeping, but there is little doubt that the number of people killed as a result of Communist repression is in the millions.

When looking at such massive casualties, an important question that should be addressed is how the role of terror in Communist regimes evolved. That is, how political terror developed into a primary tool of the elite for control and social transformation throughout Communist rule. The goals of terror were not static throughout Communist rule. As the goals of the regime changed, so did the goals of terror which drove the persecution of different groups and individuals at different times.

To answer the question of how the role of terror in Communist states evolved, I will examine the use of terror in the Soviet Union and the People’s Republic of China through the lens of a model that divides the evolution of terror into three time periods, with distinct uses of the terror in each period. I will determine the accuracy of this model, and attempt to remedy any shortcomings it may be revealed to have.
Explanation of Model Being Tested

The model being tested is one that addresses how the use of terror and the motivations behind it change over time as the Communist state progresses. It is taken from *Political Terror in Communist Systems*, a work by Alexander Dallin and George W. Breslauer. This work was largely based on the Soviet case, with some attention paid to China, Eastern Europe, and other Communist states. The model was chosen because it fits the research question well. It analyzes the evolution of the role terror plays in Communist states, and it has a number of key points and stages in the process that cases can be judged to meet. The model is divided into three stages, which they propose Communist states move through as time passes. These consist of the Takeover Stage, the Mobilization Stage, and the Post-Mobilization Stage.

The Takeover Stage, the period of time directly following the initial seizure of power by a Communist regime, is characterized by the use of political terror as a tool to consolidate power and gain or retain control. Dallin and Breslauer argue that this portion of the model is applicable to most revolutionary regimes, not just Communist ones. Differences among these regimes appear in the following stages.\(^1\) The Mobilization Stage follows the Takeover Stage and is characterized by the pursuit of a significant breakthrough in a certain area of social policy, such as industrialization, often by taking resources away from other activities. This process becomes the central focus of the regime, and the devotion to this goal requires complete control over the entire country and population, often through the use of terror, not merely against the dissident groups or resisters that were targeted in the Takeover Stage.\(^2\) In the Post-Mobilization Stage the

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Communist regime begins to move away from the use of terror as a political tool, though not necessarily completely. While the structure of the state changes and becomes more politically open, the necessity of complete control is also loosened, making the use of political terror less and less necessary. The regime no longer has major transformative ambitions, so the use of terror as a means of transforming society becomes unnecessary. Additionally, as the regime gains new sources of authority and legitimacy such as a legal code or more popular support, and has more means to convince the population to obey, it has less need for the inefficiencies of terror. Political terror may exist in some small form as a residual effect of institutions and governmental processes that were put in place in the past, but it ceases to be a major tool of the regime.\textsuperscript{3}

\textsuperscript{3} Dallin and Alexander, \textit{Political Terror}, p. 81.
**Research Strategy**

*Definition of Key Concepts and Choice of Cases*

When addressing the question of the role of terror, key concepts must be well defined. The most important concept to be defined is that of terror itself, which defined as “the arbitrary use, by organs of political authority, of severe coercion against individuals or groups, the credible threat of such use, or the arbitrary extermination of such individuals or groups,” by Dallin and Breslauer themselves.\(^4\) However, this definition is problematic, as the arbitrary use of government coercion can occur on a small scale, which does not really lend itself well to the definition of that coercion as terror. Therefore the definition of terror will be tweaked slightly from that of their work, adding to the previous definition the requirement that it occur on a mass scale. While mobilization is often described as the process of state acquisition of control over the resources of a society, in the model being investigated the mobilization stage is defined differently, as the stage in which “the Communist regime attempts to score a decisive breakthrough toward one or more critical goals.”\(^5\)

To address the question of how accurate the model is in explaining the use of terror in Communist states, the most important historical cases must be examined, and the two cases that will best serve the purposes of this study are the Soviet Union and Communist China. Although both of these cases are discussed in the work by Dallin and Breslauer, and the Soviet Union is a main focus of their writing, this paper is not treading the same ground as their work. The model is not the main focus of their book, so a direct examination of the model for these cases goes in more depth than they go into, particularly in the case of China. For both cases a

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great deal of new information has become available since the publication of their work in 1970, and looking back at the model in light of new information is useful. Additionally, major historical events took place after its publication, particularly in China, which was still in the Mobilization Stage in 1970. All these factors together mean that although the cases are some of the same they discuss in their work, this thesis is not simply a rehash of what has already been said. That being said, the addition of other cases might have made this a stronger thesis, as a model formed with much of the Soviet example in mind is very likely to be accurate for the Soviet case.

The only reasonable level to examine the institutional use of terror is by state, and they are the two largest and most powerful Communist states in history, so there is a great deal more literature on these cases than on other, smaller countries. The Soviet Union and China, while in some ways very similar, differed in many significant ways ideologically, along with vast cultural differences. Their lack of similarity in these categories will serve to test the model more effectively than looking at more similar states, such as the Soviet Union and East European Communist states, as it tests the universality of the model. Additionally, their social and ethnic structure is much less homogeneous than other Communist countries, making the process of solidification of power longer and more intricate, yielding more information, and many more cases of terror to analyze.

Also, importantly, the study will focus almost completely on domestic politics, not foreign policy, and making that distinction can be difficult in other Communist countries, as they were much more controlled by foreign powers. While Communist China and the Soviet Union were influenced by the outside world, they were large and strong enough to make most of their own decisions, whereas many smaller Communist states, particularly in Eastern Europe, and to a
lesser extent Southeast Asia, were controlled to some degree by the Soviet Union or China. Choosing the Soviet Union and China minimizes this complicating factor, and allows insight into the two countries that influenced other Communist states.

In examining how well the model applies to the two cases, the stages of the model must be paired with historical periods in each of the two countries. The dates are flexible, but for the most part the history of the two states can be divided into periods that fit the model. However, the distinction between the stages is only for the dominant process at the time, as mobilization processes came into existence in the takeover stage. For the Soviet Union, the Takeover stage spans the period from the initial Bolshevik seizure of power in 1917 to 1923, after which there was a lull in the conflict between the Bolsheviks and society. The Mobilization Stage stretches from the beginning of this lull in 1923, which lasted until approximately 1927, until Stalin’s death in 1953, including such events as mass collectivization and the Great Purge, and the Post-Mobilization Stage continues until the fall of the Soviet Union. For China, the Takeover stage starts with the Communist seizure of power in 1949 through the Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries in 1950, with the Mobilization stage starting in the 1951 with the Three-Anti and Five-Anti Campaigns and continuing throughout the 1960’s during the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution. The Post-Mobilization Stage begins with Mao’s death in 1976 and continues on to this day.

Indicators for the Validity of Stages

In order to judge the strength of the model, each stage in each case must be examined individually and judged as to how well it corresponds to the model’s predictions. The use of
terror in each stage has specific objectives or patterns, and the consistency of the cases with these patterns will indicate whether or not the model is accurate. First of all, the Takeover Stage is characterized by a number of patterns in the use of terror that are not present in the other stages. The approaches taken by Communist forces after taking power are proposed as being largely consistent with the objectives of eliminating hostile forces and their support systems in the population.  

The model outlines five main objectives of terror in the Takeover Stage, and these five objectives will serve as measuring points for the use of terror in the early years of Communist rule. The use of terror to achieve one of these goals will be an indicator of the applicability of the model. Likewise, acts of terror that are unrelated to the stated objectives of terror in the Takeover Stage will serve as indicators of the inadequacy of the model.

The five objectives of terror in the Takeover Stage include the elimination of active opponents, the deterrence of future opponents through intimidation, the expansion of control over the country, the elimination of potential opponents, and the transformation of the socioeconomic structure of the country. Additionally, Dallin and Breslauer claim that this violence, through the removal of dissenters and enemies, is self-ending, that is, it makes itself unnecessary. Therefore, a pause in the widespread use of terror between the Takeover Stage and Mobilization Stage is also consistent with the model, and if present, will support it.

The Mobilization Stage is characterized by the attempt of the Communist regime to achieve a breakthrough in realizing its primary goals, such as industrialization or collectivization, and terror is a primary tool in the pursuit of those goals. Terror in the Mobilization Stage has two major functions, control and transformation. In order to work towards the regime’s goals, the

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7 Dallin and Alexander, *Political Terror*. p. 15, 16.
state apparatus desires near total control of the resources of the state and the minds of the people, and uses terror to solidify its control by eliminating any rivals to its authority or values. This leads to the targeting of rival politicians and authority figures, as well as the elimination or persecution of entire cultural or ethnic groups who are seen as inherently opposed to the state.\footnote{Dallin and Alexander, \textit{Political Terror}. p. 56.} 

The control function of the Mobilization Stage does contain a problem with the model, as terror in the Takeover Stage can also have control functions. This lack of difference between the two stages is somewhat eased by the fact that in the Mobilization Stage members of the regime become targets of this terror when they are not in the Takeover Stage, but the elimination or persecution of entire cultural or ethnic groups is not markedly different than the expansion of control over the country and the elimination of potential opponents in the Takeover Stage. This lack of distinction weakens the model.

Like the control function, the transformational function of mobilization leads to the use of terror, but in an effort to change the makeup of society. Massive and rapid change produces resistance among those with vested interests in the status quo, and Communist regimes eliminated that resistance with coercive power\footnote{Dallin and Alexander, \textit{Political Terror}. p. 56.}. The transformation function of the mobilization stage is seen most prominently in collectivization of the countryside, but also in the Cultural Revolution in China in the late 1960’s\footnote{Dallin and Alexander, \textit{Political Terror}. p. 57.}. This transformation is characterized by the need to break down existing power structures in order to build a new, state-oriented structure in their place\footnote{Dallin and Alexander, \textit{Political Terror}. p. 61.}. This is largely accomplished by the removal of rich landowners and middle class peasants from their positions of authority, sometimes by confiscating their lands and removing their titles, but often by executions. While the reintegration of peasants into the new structure did
not require the same level of violence as the breaking down of the previous structure, some resistance to the new order required coercive force to be used to enforce obedience, especially in the Soviet Union.

In determining the model’s accuracy, acts of terror in the Mobilization Stage will first be determined to serve either a control or transformation function, and from there divided into more specific aspects of those functions. The validity of the control function aspect of the model will be determined by examining acts of terror and judging whether they serve to eliminate rival authority figures and their followers, or groups that had rival ideological and cultural backgrounds. The presence of acts of terror that follow those guidelines will serve as indicators of the validity of the control function of the model.

Acts of terror falling under the transformation function are characterized by the attempt to remove existing structures of authority, primarily in the countryside for collectivization, but also in other areas of society, such as in the removal of traditional ways of acting during the Chinese Cultural Revolution, such as custom, religion, and education.13 Therefore, terror committed as acts of class warfare against landowners, the rich, or middle-class peasants falls under the transformation function. Also, acts of coercion forcing adherence to the new system fall into this category. The presence of these specific types of terror serve as indicators of the accuracy of this section of the model.

Analysis of the Post-Mobilization stage is more problematic, as even the authors of the model admit, there is less evidence supporting it, and it amounts to a change in degree of the use of terror, rarely the complete cessation of it14. Political terror will continue to exist, but will often sharply decline, due to one of three processes. First, as the authority of the regime becomes more

13 Dallin and Alexander, Political Terror. p. 58.
14 Dallin and Alexander, Political Terror. p. 81.
established and secure, acts of terror become less important because there are other forms of coercion available, such as regular police, the judicial system, and legal norms. The model states that the reason terror is so prevalent in earlier Communist activities is that coercive power is the only power a Communist regime initially has, but in the aftermath of mobilization, it gains other ways to influence the population, through material incentives or normative cultural authority. Second, the normative authority of the regime and its ability to influence with materials benefits replace terror as a means of ensuring compliance, indicated by increased benefits given to supporting groups or individuals, or increased cultural support for the regime. Lastly, the total level of control of the ruling elite may lessen, as with less need for total control there is less need for terror, seen in the increase of individual freedoms within the Communist states. By analyzing the decrease in the use of terror as a tool of the state, the accuracy of the post-mobilization stage of the model can be supported. Additionally, large-scale uses of political terror in this time period would suggest that the model is not completely accurate, although it does state that the transition is not necessarily a complete removal of terror, but a major reduction.

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Methods and Tools of State-Sponsored Terror

It is important to look at the figures indicating millions of dead and imprisoned as a result of communist terror to understand the vast scale of the use of terror, but it is also important to look at the details behind the statistics. Communist leaders in both the Soviet Union and the People’s Republic of China used a variety of methods to intimidate, harass, imprison, and kill those opposed to them, and they had a number of groups that acted for them. Nearly every means of killing people was used by both regimes, from shootings to stabbings to beatings and so on, but there are some more specific and noteworthy tools of terror used that should be examined.

One of the most notable differences between the Soviet and Chinese uses of terror is that the Soviet model was based largely on imprisonment and executions carried out by members of the secret police or military, and the Chinese model was based less on eliminating opponents than on changing them. This difference is possibly a result of the Chinese Communist’s experience with self-criticism and other techniques developed during years of guerilla fighting, all of which led them to believe that class enemies could be successfully rehabilitated. The Chinese use of terror more often took the form of rehabilitation or reeducation, in which the accused’s old self was attacked, and they were given the chance to confess and work to fix their anti-party beliefs. This is not to say that imprisonment and executions were not common, as they were, but they were not on the same level as in the USSR. Chinese terror more often took on a social aspect, emphasizing public intimidation. The targets, from the landlords targeted in the early days of land reform to high ranking bureaucrats during the Cultural Revolution, were

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forced to endure accusations and shame in large public sessions. These so-called struggle sessions set large agitated groups against accused individuals, sometimes resulting in confession and public shaming, and sometimes beatings and abuse that caused death during the Cultural Revolution. This public humiliation was often paired with social isolation, leading to countless suicides.

Another aspect of Communist terror that seems to be somewhat specific to the Chinese case is the idea of thought reform. Instead of killing dissenters, they would often be locked away and forced to endure propaganda, sessions of self-criticism, and work towards becoming good communists again. Though this did not necessarily involve violence, the pressure for the dissenters to reform often had a silent threat behind it, in the event that they refused.

One major tool of terror that both regimes used to devastating effect was that of hunger. The Soviet collectivization process and subsequent food requisitions eventually led to as many as 6 million deaths. Most of these probably could have been prevented, but the state had little incentive to aid the victims as most of those dying were peasants who had previously opposed Communist plans. Like the Soviets, the Chinese, through a combination of poor management and sheer apathy regarding the death of the peasants, essentially manufactured a famine that took between 20 and 43 million lives.

Additionally, both states had extensive prison systems which they used to remove opponents of the regime from public life and supply large amounts of free labor. The Chinese laogai system consisted of nearly 1000 large camps that also served as public works projects.

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Many sent off to rehabilitation or reform camps were in actuality sent to prison work camps. This extensive system of camps likely housed around 50 million people, and few prisoners managed to leave the system. They were seen as forever tainted by their past, and were often just sent to work camps in semi-prisonlike circumstances after their sentence was completed.\textsuperscript{23}

Like the Chinese, the Soviets had a major prison system, the gulag, to which they sent prisoners for long periods of time and which they used as a source of cheap labor. Huge construction projects such as railroads, irrigation systems, and mines were worked on by prisoners, as many of the most profitable natural resources of the Soviet Union were located in inhospitable places to which few free workers wanted to go. Both ordinary criminals and political prisoners were kept at these camps, but especially harsh punishments were reserved for ideological opponents of the regime, who were often targeted for death by the guards.\textsuperscript{24} At its peak, the gulag system held nearly 2 million people in 1941, and continued in some form or other until the death of Stalin.\textsuperscript{25}

One major tool used by the Soviets, more than the Chinese, was deportation as a weapon. The Soviets, faced with a great deal of undeveloped land, and social and ethnic groups it considered dangerous, forced millions to move from their villages and homes to new locations to work for the state, often in terrible conditions. The two most notable instances of this strategy were the processes of decossackization and dekulakization, which will be discussed later in this paper, along with the periodic removal of resisting groups in Eastern Europe, particularly during World War II.

\textsuperscript{25} Courtois and Kramer, \textit{The Black Book}. p. 205-213.
The Takeover Stage in the Soviet Union

The Takeover Stage in the Soviet Union lasted from 1917 to 1923, beginning with the October Revolution. Although 1923 is a good point of transition between the Takeover and Mobilization Stages due to a lull in the use of terror by the regime which lasted until about 1927, the movement between stages was not an immediate one. Some aspects of the Mobilization Stage were present before then, but the major shift did not occur until after 1923. As stated earlier, acts of terror within this time frame will be judged to be supporting the model if they involve one of five indicators: the elimination of active opponents, the deterrence of future opponents through intimidation, the expansion of control over the country, the elimination of potential opponents, and the transformation of the socioeconomic structure of the country. Additionally, the presence of a pause or downgrade in the use of terror between the Takeover Stage and the Mobilization Stage will also serve as an indicator of the applicability of the model.

When the Bolshevik party gained control of Russia in October, 1917, they were far from unanimously supported. While they claimed to represent the workers, many in the population, even those of their base, were resistant to some of their goals. The October Revolution was far from inevitable, as there were a number of important factors at play that destabilized the state and allowed the Bolsheviks to jump in to seize power.

Peasant uprisings over land reform, the breakdown of the military, pushes for autonomy by client nations in the Russian empire, and the politicization of the urban working class in pursuit of workers’ power, all combined to bring down the existing regime. The Bolsheviks could really only claim to derive their authority from one of those groups, the urban working
class, and even then their representation of their interests was not absolute. Many other groups had played a part in bringing about the end of the old order, and had been acting independently, pursuing their own goals. These were not necessarily the goals of the Bolsheviks, and in many cases the Bolsheviks used terror to ensure that their interests prevailed.

One of the first actions taken by the Bolsheviks was to take control of the media of the country, and to suppress and eliminate those whom they could not control. On October 26th a few commissars, independent of Bolshevik leadership, forbid counterrevolutionary works, shut down all seven of the capital’s main newspapers, and took control of radio and telegraph stations. Although this happened while the main Bolshevik leadership was busy forming the new government, within a few days they issued a decree legalizing those actions. This targeting of the press meets some of the objectives outlined in the model, specifically the expansion of control over the country by seizing the radio and telegraph stations for themselves, and the elimination of potential opponents, by not giving the newspapers the chance to print any anti-Communist writings.

The widespread and legal use of terror by the Bolsheviks post-revolution largely came about as a result of the formation of a group known as the Petrograd Revolutionary Military Committee, or PRMC. The PRMC acted as the revolutionary organization of the Communist leadership, and made decisions on revolutionary activities, including importantly, the elimination of counterrevolutionaries. The groundwork for large-scale terror was set on November 13, 1917, when the PRMC created the classification of “enemies of the people.” At the time, this meant individuals who held high-ranking positions in a number of different areas, such as banking or railways, and whose names would be publicly posted. A few days later, this was followed by an

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announcement that “All individuals suspected of sabotage, speculation, and opportunism are now liable to be arrested immediately as enemies of the people and transferred to the Kronstadt prisons,” creating another classification of “suspects.” These two proclamations together created the legal groundwork for the targeting of entire groups of people whom the regime viewed as dangerous, even if they had not committed a crime.29

While the Bolsheviks had a great deal of control in the capitol, in southern Russia the Whites resisted Communist forces, and once defeated, paid a heavy price. The violence in the region was not limited to soldiers, as the Bolsheviks frequently used extreme force not only against captured soldiers, but against civilian supporters of the Whites, or even those suspected of being supporters. In occupied cities throughout southern Russia officers and civilians are reported to have been tortured and executed in countless horrible ways, from fifty officers being thrown into a blast furnace in Taganrog to hundreds of officers in Evpatoria being tied up and thrown into the sea to drown. These large-scale killings targeted those seen to be enemies of the people as well as military officers. In the killing of 240 in Yalta in March 1918 about a third were lawyers, journalists, and other civilians seen to be dangerous.30 The largest episodes of killing occurred towards the end of the conflict, as in the last few months of the civil war, in November and December of 1920, over 50,000 were executed by advancing Red armies.31 These killings of both White officers and civilians matches with the objectives of the elimination of active opponents and also the deterrence of future opponents through intimidation.

Another major cause of terror in the early years of Communist rule was the policy of requisitioning of food from the peasants. Due to shortages of food in the cities, the government

decreed that peasants were required to give up a certain portion of their harvest, something the peasants adamantly opposed, and resisted, frequently hiding food. This led to the government decreeing the creation of a food army, groups of poor peasants working with the government to seize the food stores of the richer peasants. This led to incredible brutality and caused many peasants to riot and revolt, leading to violent suppression and in some cases large-scale conflict.\textsuperscript{32} Often angry groups of peasants would converge on the soviet within a town, and would be violently dispersed by Red Guard or Cheka members. Public execution was a popular means of intimidating the peasants, as was taking hostages from rebellious regions who would be killed if the peasants in the area did not turn over the proper amount of grain.\textsuperscript{33} The violent seizure of food served to further the transformation of the socioeconomic structure of the country, one of the main objectives of the Takeover Stage, and the violent suppression of any resistance served to eliminated active opponents, another objective.

The majority of early terror was carried out by the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission to Combat the Counter-revolution, Speculation, and Sabotage, better known as the Cheka, established by the Bolshevik government on December 7, 1918, in response to fear of a massive, widespread strike by state employees. The leaders of the strike were quickly arrested, the first of many arrests of striking workers. This was followed on January 6\textsuperscript{th} by the forceful breakup of the Constitutional Assembly, a body in which the Bolsheviks had little influence, controlling only 175 out of 707 seats.\textsuperscript{34} This action is in accordance with the third objective of the Takeover Stage, the expansion of Communist control over the country, by removing structural limits on Bolshevik power within the government.

\textsuperscript{32} Courtois and Kramer, \textit{The Black Book}. p. 66.
\textsuperscript{33} Courtois and Kramer, \textit{The Black Book}. p. 72.
\textsuperscript{34} Courtois and Kramer, \textit{The Black Book}. p. 62.
As the Bolsheviks lost popularity in 1918, they enacted harsher measures of control, using the Cheka, which had expanded from around 100 members to over 12,000 in less than six months, as their main tool. Martial law was declared in many areas that supported the Menshevik and Socialist Revolutionary opposition, and opposition leaders were arrested, all non-Bolshevik soviets were dissolved, all non-Bolshevik newspapers were shut down, and strikes were violently repressed.\footnote{Courtois and Kramer, \textit{The Black Book}. p. 67.} The situation escalated as the government reinstated the death penalty in June 1918, leading to the execution of many strikers and opposition leaders by the Cheka. This process reached its peak following the assassination of V. Volardsky, a Bolshevik leader, which led to the arrest of over 800 opposition leaders.\footnote{Courtois and Kramer, \textit{The Black Book}. p. 70.} This combination of violently breaking strikes, arresting opposition leaders, and shutting down opposition newspapers was aimed at the elimination of active opponents, the expansion of control over the country, and the transformation of the socioeconomic structure of the country, as many of the strikers and opposition leaders were protesting policies the Bolsheviks enacted to transform the society and the economy.

The Red Terror, a period of widespread executions and arrests, began on September 5, 1918, following widespread revolts, with over 140 occurring during the summer, legalizing the executions of any resisting the state, and beginning the tradition of treating those who engaged in any resistance, real or potential, as enemy combatants in a civil war, punishable by death. Numbers vary, but somewhere between 10,000 and 15,000 people were killed in the following two months.\footnote{Courtois and Kramer, \textit{The Black Book}. p. 78.}
One incredibly important episode of terror in this time period, de-Cossackization, consisted of the systematic and widespread extermination of the Cossacks as a group. Labeled as class enemies by the Bolsheviks and deprived of their traditional rights, Cossacks joined with the Whites to resist the Bolsheviks, but the brutality of their treatment exceeded that of other White supporters. The Red Army occupiers began by simply removing their class privileges, but they soon began a system of extermination, executing over 8000 Cossacks in February and March 1919.\textsuperscript{38} After this initial blow, the Cossacks rose in revolt. However, they were quickly defeated, and the second round of terror was even more extreme than the first, with over 6000 Cossacks executed in October, 1920, alone. The Cossacks’ towns were destroyed, their goods were seized, and all the survivors were deported, with the men sent to forced labor camps. In many areas, every man between the ages of 18 and 50 was sent to a prison camp and the women, children, and old men were left to attempt to travel to a distant resettlement point, in winter, without horses, carts, and much of their food, all of which had been requisitioned by the Bolsheviks.\textsuperscript{39} In all, out of an estimated 3 million Cossacks, between 300,000 and 500,000 were killed or deported in 1919 and 1920.\textsuperscript{40}

Although the conflict with the Whites was largely resolved by the end of 1920, the Bolsheviks faced increased resistance from within the population, specifically from the peasants revolting against requisitioning. These protests had evolved past the point of being riots to becoming full-scale revolts, with the Bolsheviks having no influence in some areas of the country.\textsuperscript{41} The largest and longest lasting of these was the revolt in Tambov Province, in which the requisition numbers had been set so high that to fill the quotas would mean the peasants

\begin{footnotes}
\item[38] Courtois and Kramer, \textit{The Black Book}. p. 99.
\item[40] Courtois and Kramer, \textit{The Black Book}. p. 102.
\item[41] Courtois and Kramer, \textit{The Black Book}. p. 108.
\end{footnotes}
would all starve to death. Thousands of peasants joined the resistance, and in the end nearly 100,000 soldiers were sent to the province to put down the insurrection, through brutal means. Order No. 171 is an example of the methods used to end the insurrection. This decree includes shooting on sight any citizen who will not provide his name, and executing the eldest son of any family found with arms or harboring bandits. These procedures were combined with the use of concentration camps, in which approximately 50,000 peasants were held in terrible conditions for months. This imprisonment and execution of resisting peasants served the objective of the elimination of active opponents and the deterrence of future opponents through intimidation, two of the objectives of the Takeover Stage.

The intense requisitioning, a poor harvest, and poor management of the agricultural output of the country created severe famine in many areas of the countryside in 1921 and 1922, notably the areas that had been the most resistant to Communist control. The high requisition totals, which were sustained despite the awareness that the peasants could not survive if they gave away so much grain, meant that the Communist regime essentially had decided to starve to death the resisting peasants. Although the Party was eventually pressured by the international community and domestic intellectuals to give some aid, the famine left almost 30 million people starving, and at least 5 million died while it lasted, meeting the objective of eliminating active opponents.

Another group targeted for persecution or elimination was that of the clergy. Although the Bolsheviks had legalized the separation of church and state in 1918, it had been unable to openly attack religion in society until 1922. In the midst of the major famine, Communist leaders

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realized that the people were so desperate that any increase in government income would be a positive. Therefore, the Communist leadership announced on February 26, 1922, that all valuable objects would be confiscated from churches. This led to clashes between the secret police and the clergy, resulting in thousands of priests, monks, and nuns being arrested, dramatically reducing the strength of the church in public life, part of the objective of the transformation of the socioeconomic structure of the country, part of the Takeover Stage.46

The Takeover Stage in Communist China

The Takeover Stage in Communist China followed the defeat of the Nationalist forces by the Communists in 1949, and lasted for only a short period of time, through the Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries in 1950, before moving into the Mobilization Stage. After the aforementioned campaign, the regime had almost completely solidified its position, and the major campaigns shortly after, the Three-Anti and Five-Anti Campaigns, included members of the Communist Party in their targets, which is indicative of the Mobilization Stage. The short length of the Takeover Stage in China is a result of a number of factors, but the most important was that most of the actions that generally occur in the Takeover Stage already had occurred in China during the civil war. The prolonged nature of the conflict enabled the Chinese Communists to become relatively well established in many areas of the country, rendering the immediate removal of resistance less important than in the Soviet Union. The same indicators will be used to assess the objectives of the use of terror: the elimination of active opponents, the deterrence of future opponents through intimidation, the expansion of control over the country, the elimination of potential opponents, and the transformation of the socioeconomic structure of the country.

As the civil war had already been won and resistance largely destroyed before the Communist gained power, they were faced with little organized resistance from counterrevolutionaries. Moreover the new government enjoyed the support of the peasants, who constituted 80% of the population. Accordingly, harsh oppressive actions were not initially necessary. Most of the counterrevolutionaries had either been killed or had fled to Taiwan with

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the nationalists, so there was no powerful consolidated counterrevolutionary force that required suppression.\textsuperscript{48} This is not to say that no one opposed Communist rule, and that those who did were not persecuted. KMT agents and supporters were arrested and executed by the Communist throughout the civil war and after.\textsuperscript{49}

One of the most important aspects of early Communist policy was land reform, both for the sake of removing the gentry class of landlords, who were seen as parasitic, and for economic benefits. Despite early efforts to avoid widespread bloodshed during the process of seizing and redistributing land, the stated goal of the elimination of the gentry as a social class meant they were to be intensely persecuted. In public meetings villagers were encouraged to condemn their landlords and denounce them for their oppression. The result of these sessions was at best that they were stripped of all their lands. Many were executed immediately, though some were given small plots of land to farm themselves, leaving them alive but without social standing.\textsuperscript{50} In all, this episode of land reform is estimated to have cost between 2 to 5 million, and at least 1 million lives, serving essentially to wipe out the entire class of landowners.\textsuperscript{51} This system of public denunciation and confiscation of land served two purposes that fall in line with the objectives of terror in the Takeover Stage. First, it contributed to the socioeconomic transformation of society by destroying the traditional rural societal structure of peasant and landlord and enforced a new egalitarian society. Secondly, it expanded Communist control over the country, as the removal of the landlords and rich peasants from their positions of authority allowed young peasant members

\textsuperscript{48} Meisner. \textit{Mao’s China}. p. 78.
\textsuperscript{49} Meisner. \textit{Mao’s China}. p. 80.
\textsuperscript{50} Meisner. \textit{Mao’s China}. p. 107.
\textsuperscript{51} Courtois and Kramer, \textit{The Black Book}. p. 479.
of the Communist party to take up positions of power, and therefore allowed the Communist party to increase its influence in rural Chinese life.\(^{52}\)

Beginning in 1950, the Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries began as an effort to eliminate any remaining resistance to Communist rule. Although there had been no large and dangerous counterrevolutionary force, remnants of the KMT and others had rioted hundreds of times, causing large-scale destruction of property and many deaths. Though these incidents were few, and probably did not call for such a major campaign, the Korean War and the potential for outside intervention against the Communist state intimidated the Communist leadership, pushing them to act more harshly vis-a-vis the population. Mao’s decree on “Regulations Regarding the Punishment of Counterrevolutionaries” in February, 1951, enhanced these efforts and created a sense of terror among the populace.\(^{53}\)

The campaign became more and more public, with counterrevolutionaries tried and sentenced to death in public, and the names and details of executions published in newspapers in order to instill fear in the population. Attempts to stir up patriotic fever used the ongoing Korean War as an excuse for the party to root out those who opposed the state.\(^{54}\) There are no completely accurate statistics for the number dead. The official number given by Mao was 700,000 executed and 1,200,000 imprisoned, but the number may actually have been much more.\(^{55}\)

Many of these deaths were a result of the central party putting in place quotas of counterrevolutionaries to execute, but because many areas did not have enough


\(^{55}\) Kuisong. “Reconsidering the Campaign.” p. 120.
counterrevolutionaries, many were arrested or executed for little reason.\textsuperscript{56} This elimination of counterrevolutionaries and political opponents falls under the category of the elimination of active opponents, and the public nature in which it was done, in order to create fear among the population, falls in line with the deterrence of future opponents through intimidation, supporting the Takeover Stage of the model through two indicators.

Following the Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries and the completion of land reform, the Communist state relaxed its use of terror for a short time. However, collectivization and purges soon brought terror and repression back to the forefront of state policy.

\textsuperscript{56} Kuisong. “Reconsidering the Campaign.” p. 113.
Similarities and Differences in Takeover Stages

The conditions under which the Bolsheviks and the Chinese Communists took over were extremely different, and their actions in the years that followed show this difference. The Bolsheviks were in a much more precarious situation, as they were faced with a brutal civil war, a resistant peasant class that made up the majority of the population of the country, and were forced to rely on a state apparatus and bureaucracy that already existed due to their inexperience in governing. On the other side, the Chinese Communists came to power after most of the fighting and resistance had been defeated, so they were not forced to contend with a civil war while attempting to rule a country. Also, their base of support was the peasantry, over ¾ of the Chinese people, so they were not faced with a population that did not want them in power.

The difference in the responses to these situations can be viewed as a symptom of the different atmospheres in which the Communist leaders existed. The Soviets were much more violent and repressive than the Chinese, perhaps because they faced many more enemies in their first few years of rule, and their consolidation of power was a more difficult process, while the Chinese Communists were much more secure from the moment they took control of the country. Many of the acts of terror the Bolsheviks carried out in the Takeover Stage were a result of the civil war and the presence of powerful political and ideological opponents, obstacles the Chinese Communists had already overcome during their civil war. This meant there were fewer threats to power for the Chinese, which gave them less need to use terror.

While the Takeover Stage is much longer and has more cases of terror in the Soviet case, the lack of extreme and prolonged terror in the Takeover Stage in China does not disprove it. The
Chinese case also supports the model, as the Communists’ encouragement of class warfare and the Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries serve as support for the validity of the model.
The Mobilization Stage in the Soviet Union

The Mobilization Stage in the Soviet Union lasted from the beginning of the lull in 1923 to Stalin’s death in 1953 which marked the end of the use of terror as a tool of the state, during which time mass collectivization and the Great Purge racked up huge body counts. To determine the accuracy of the model in describing and outlining the Mobilization Stage, the uses of terror within this stage must be analyzed to determine whether they match the criteria for terror in this stage outlined in the model. Therefore, instances of terror will be determined to have either a control function or a transformation function, with those having control functions either serving to eliminate rival authority figures and their followers, or groups that had rival ideological or cultural backgrounds. Those acts of terror having transformation functions must either be characterized by the attempt to remove existing structures of authority, or as acts of coercion forcing adherence to the new system. It should again be noted that the control function of eliminating groups that had rival ideological or cultural backgrounds is essentially identical to the Takeover Stage’s elimination of potential opponents, so the presence of this indicator is not an effective means of supporting the existence of the Mobilization Stage as a separate period from the Takeover Stage.

The early years of the Mobilization stage, beginning in 1923, are marked by relative quiet and the absence of large-scale terror, as the New Economic Plan and an uneasy truce with the peasants left the Communist leadership unable or unwilling to pursue plans of mass transformation at the time. This did not last however, as the peasants had always been seen as the real enemies of the Communist regime, and beginning around 1927 the use of terror by the GPU,
the secret police organization that had replaced the Cheka, began to grow, and a few years later became a major factor in the forced collectivization of the countryside.

Following Lenin’s death in 1924, Stalin emerged victorious from the ensuing power struggle, and began to eliminate those who opposed him. In 1927 the conflict between Stalin and others within the Communist Party, notably Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, and others who made up the leadership of the Left Opposition came to the surface. Hundreds of Trotsky supporters were arrested and their leaders were kicked out of the Communist Party and arrested in November 1927, followed by show trials and exile. This targeted elimination of Stalin’s political opponents and their supporters falls exactly in line with the model’s control function, eliminating rival authority figures and their followers.\(^57\)

Following the exile of many of Stalin’s political rivals, his leadership and the Communist party were in much more stable and stronger positions that in previous years, and it was decided that the time had come to force the peasants to acquiesce to Bolshevik ideals and demands.\(^58\)

The dekulakization program, the attempt to eliminate the kulaks, or richer peasants, as a social class, began officially in 1929, but had its roots in earlier operations, such as campaigns carried out by the GPU in September 1927 to arrest kulaks in several provinces.\(^59\) With an official decree from Stalin that called for “the eradication of all kulak tendencies and the elimination of the kulaks as a class,” the campaign began. Carried out in the midst of the collectivization campaign, the kulaks were targeted for arrest and deportation in staggering numbers.

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Targeted in three groups, those who actively resisted the regime, those who did not actively resist, but were by their nature enemies of the state, and those who were loyal to the Communist state. The arrest and deportation of the Kulaks was seen as a way to eliminate a social class that was fundamentally opposed to the goals of the Communist state, and also as a way to gain large amounts of free labor for state projects. Those in the first grouping were to be arrested and sent to prison camps, increasing the population of GPU prison camps from 40,000 to 140,000 a year and a half later. Their labor was used for massive and inefficient projects, including giant logging operations, hundreds of miles of railroads, and in one of the largest uses of manpower, a canal linking the Baltic to the White Sea, over 150 miles long, which required nearly 125,000 workers. Those in the second and third groupings were not sent to prison camps, but were deported to remote areas in need of development, and given virtually no aid or sustenance on their journey there or once they arrived, resulting in thousands of deaths. Between February, 1930, and December, 1931, over 1.8 million kulaks were deported, and it is estimated that around 300,000 of them died in the process. This forced relocation of the kulaks served two of the purposes of terror in the Mobilization Stage of the model, the control function of the elimination of rival ideological groups, and the transformation function of removing existing structures of authority, supporting the model. However, it also falls under the transformation of the socioeconomic structure and the elimination of active and potential opponents, two functions of terror in the Takeover Stage. This ability to be part of both stages shows a problem with the model. Dekulakization fits under both the Takeover and the Mobilization Stages, but because it followed acts of terror that mark the Mobilization Stage, it is labeled as part of the Mobilization

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Stage. This shows that in some ways the Takeover and Mobilization Stages are not very different, and in fact the model might be best served to state that the elimination of opponents from rival ideological and cultural backgrounds spans both stages, and is not an indicator for either stage.

Following the conflicts between the Communist state and the peasants of the Soviet Union, the Great Famine of 1932-33 ended up having one of the highest death counts of any actions taken by the regime. Although the state was not the direct cause of the famine, its actions created the circumstances that led what might have simply been a minor famine to spiral out of control and ultimately kill over 6 million people. Faced with increased resistance, such as theft of food by peasants across the Soviet Union, particularly in Ukraine, the Soviet Union became stricter, arresting peasants for any theft or damage of state property, which in reality meant that they could be arrested for taking a few ears of corn back from the fields. This law resulted in more than 125,000 arrests and over 5,000 executions, but with ever increasing requisition targets, resistance still continued.  

Alerted to the fact that the risk of famine was very high for the coming months in the summer of 1932, the Communist leadership refused to lower its requisition orders, seeing the famine as a means to eliminate the troublesome peasants. As the famine grew, grain continued to be shipped out of affected areas, leaving the peasants with nothing with which to sustain themselves. With no food in their villages, they attempted to flee to cities in the hope of finding food, only to be stopped and returned by GPU forces, who had been ordered to prevent peasants from fleeing to the cities. Without any food in their villages and without the ability to leave to find food, millions of peasants starved to death.

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Throughout all this, the state shipped 18 million hundredweight of grain abroad to pay for industrialization, indirectly leading to massive casualties. Total harvests in 1932 were 12% below average, so not good, but not likely to cause a famine without the 44% increase in requisitions for the year. With a total of 4 million dead in Ukraine, 1 million dead in Kazakhstan, and 1 million death in the Northern Caucasus and the Black Earth region, the Great Famine wiped out much of the population of the Soviet Union. This use of famine by the Soviet state to eliminate peasants falls under the control function of eliminating groups that had rival ideological backgrounds, as the peasant’s desire to control their own land was in direct conflict with the Soviet desire to collectivize the land, supporting the model. However, like dekulakization, the Soviet handling of the famine could be classified as a part of the Takeover Stage as well as the Mobilization Stage as part of the transformation of the socioeconomic structure of the country and the elimination of active opponents, and in fact matches up very closely with the requisitioning of food from peasants in the Takeover Stage. This ambiguity of classification further shows the similarities between some indicators of the Takeover and Mobilization Stages.

The Great Purge, an extended episode of terror purging the ranks of the Communist Party, lasted from approximately 1934 to 1939, resulting in the arrests and deaths of millions. Also known as the Great Terror, the purge began as a result of the 1934 murder of Sergey Kirov, a high-ranking official in the Communist Party. The murder of Kirov was used as a pretense for the arrest of hundreds accused to be part of a conspiracy to kill him, and as this process continued, the purge’s targets became much less specific. Although it was claimed that Zinoviev

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and Kamenev, two of Stalin’s political opponents, along with other opposition leaders, caused the murder, later inquiries make it seem that Stalin might have been responsible.\textsuperscript{67} Arrested and tried in January, 1935, they were sentenced to prison sentences of between 5 and 10 years. These trials were not publicized, in contrast to the Moscow Trials of 1936, which were used for propaganda purposes.\textsuperscript{68} In the aftermath of the murder and these trials, the purging of the ranks of the Communist Party began, with the result that approximately 9\% of party members were kicked out of the party, and over 15,000 of those kicked out were arrested.\textsuperscript{69}

In 1936 the terror continued with the show trials of Zinoviev, Kamenev, and other old Bolsheviks. Already serving jail terms, in exchange for their lives and the lives of their families they were forced to confess to plotting to kill Soviet leaders, reinstate capitalism, sabotage production, and overthrow the government, all in cooperation with Trotskyite groups.\textsuperscript{70} Despite promises that their lives would be spared if they confessed, days after the trials ended they were executed.\textsuperscript{71} This was followed by two more Moscow Trials, the next focusing on alleged followers of Trotsky and their sympathizers, which ended with 17 forced to confess, and 13 of the 17 executed.\textsuperscript{72}

The final trial, which began March 1938, was the largest and most extensive of the three, implicating extremely high ranking members of the Communist Party, with three members of Lenin’s Politburo, particularly party theoretician Bukharin, Yagoda, the former director of the NKVD, and Rakovsky, the leader of the Baltic and Ukrainian revolutionary movements.\textsuperscript{73} They,

\textsuperscript{67} Conquest, \textit{The Great Terror}. p. 73.  
\textsuperscript{68} Conquest, \textit{The Great Terror}. p. 91.  
\textsuperscript{69} Courtois and Kramer, \textit{The Black Book}. p. 182.  
\textsuperscript{70} Conquest, \textit{The Great Terror}. p. 147.  
\textsuperscript{71} Conquest, \textit{The Great Terror}. p. 170.  
\textsuperscript{72} Conquest, \textit{The Great Terror}. p. 254.  
\textsuperscript{73} Conquest, \textit{The Great Terror}. p. 497.
along with others, were accused of being followers of Trotsky, Rightists, Tsarist agents, and German or Japanese agents, as well as being part of a wide conspiracy to bring down the Communist state through terrorism, murder, and sabotage. All but 3 were sentenced to death at the end of the trial, removing some of the last vestiges of the Old Bolshevik leadership. These arrests and executions fit extremely well with the control function of terror in the mobilization stage of the model, namely the elimination of rival authority figures and their followers, as nearly every single political rival of Stalin’s, including all Old Bolsheviks who could claim to have similar credibility as leaders, were eliminated and through their forced confessions discredited, giving a pretense for their followers also to be eliminated.

While the political elites were being targeted, other high-ranking members of the government were also being purged, especially officers in the military. Seen as a threat by Stalin, many generals were accused of being traitors and working with the German military, and were arrested and imprisoned, if not also killed. The highest ranking officers were most heavily targeted, with 3 of the 5 Marshals of the time purged, 14 of the 16 Army Commanders Class I and II, 8 of 8 Admirals, 60 of 67 Corps Commanders, with similar numbers continuing down the hierarchy. In all, nearly half of the officers corps were killed or imprisoned, totaling around 35,000. This elimination of military officers also served to destroy rival authority figures within the state, further supporting the model.

In between the trials centering on the Communist leadership, the common people of the Soviet Union were being treated to a much less public reign of terror. The men being tried were forced to confess to being part of huge conspiracies, and therefore in the eyes of the state there

must be many in the population also part of those conspiracies. Beginning in July 1937, the terror was authorized to be spread to the general population, targeting any undesirable elements.\(^7\) Any connection with the outside world such as correspondence with a foreigner or time spent abroad was a major reason for arrest, as was having odd religious views, such as being a Jehovah’s Witness. Members of foreign nationalities such as Chinese, Greeks, and Ukrainians were also targeted for arrest.\(^8\) The intellectuals of the Soviet Union were particularly targeted, as they were seen to be very dangerous due to their exposure to ideas outside the Communist orthodoxy.\(^9\)

Any past experience with an anti-Communist group, such as being a part of a resistance movement or a member of the Whites could make a person a target for arrest, and any interaction or link, no matter how innocent or accidental, with someone who had been arrested was seen as a valid reason to be accused, leading many to be arrested simply for knowing someone else in a suspicious group.\(^10\) These waves of mass arrests spiraled out of control, targeting people at random, since nearly everyone was a suspect for something, and ultimately over 5% of the population of the Soviet Union had been arrested by the end of the terror.\(^11\)

Targeting these specific groups for arrest follows with the control function of the mobilization stage of the model, removing groups with rival ideological and cultural backgrounds, as those with exposure to different cultures were seen as potential enemies, since they embodied something besides the standard Communist mindset. Others, such as those in religious sects or those with past anti-Communist experiences, also fall under the classification


of those with unorthodox backgrounds, making them unlikely to fall completely in line with
Communist ideology. These cases conform to the stated functions of terror in the mobilization
stage of the model, supporting it, but the targeting of those with tenuous connections to other
suspects does not as clearly correspond to the model, since most of those arrests seemed to have
no clear rationale, but were rather the result of activity by overzealous agents of the state.
However, the stated motivation behind the arrests remains in line with the model, even if the
reality of the targeting of the arrests was not. Additionally, with everyone afraid of arrest, the
fear of being in any way seen as resisting the regime led most in the population to everything
they could to cooperate with the regime, serving a control function.
The Mobilization Stage in Communist China

The mobilization stage in China began in 1951 with the Three-Anti and Five-Anti Campaigns, and lasted until Mao’s death in 1976, encompassing forced collectivization, the Great Leap Forward, and the Cultural Revolution, among other major projects of the regime. The Mobilization Stage can be determined to have begun with the Three-Anti and Five-Anti Campaigns because they targeted party members, something which the model states happened almost exclusively in the Mobilization Stage. Like the Mobilization Stage in the Soviet Union, terror used by the Chinese state in this stage will be to determine whether it possessed a control function or a transformation function. Instances of terror having control functions served to eliminate either rival authority figures and their followers or groups that had rival ideological or cultural backgrounds. Those acts of terror judged as having transformation functions must either have involved the attempt to remove existing structures of authority, or an effort to compel adherence to the new system.

The Campaign to Suppress Counterrevolutionaries was quickly followed by further campaigns to eliminate certain “undesirable” aspects of society. The Three-Anti campaign, focusing on the elimination of waste, corruption, and excessive bureaucracy, began in 1951, and was quickly followed by the Five-Anti campaign, focusing on the elimination of bribery, fraud, tax evasion, lying, and revealing state secrets. These two campaigns occurred at the same time as a thought reform movement was being carried out, an effort to reform the ideas of intellectuals within society, educating them, sometimes coercively, to fall in line with party ideas.

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The thought reform campaign did not attempt to eliminate opposing intellectuals, although some were sent to work camps, but mostly focused on putting intense social and mental pressure on intellectuals, typically part of the university system, to criticize themselves and confess to harboring counterrevolutionary ideas. Though violence was not often used in this campaign, the social pressure was intense, and led many intellectuals to give in, with the result that the Communist Party achieved greater control over the education system.\(^{84}\)

The Three-Anti campaign began in 1951 and targeted bureaucratic officials and party members seen as unreliable, both those new ones admitted during the civil war who were not able to function in the new environment, and older members who were feared to have been corrupted by city life. This campaign also consisted of few arrests, but many firings and a great deal of public humiliation and social pressure, as “struggle sessions” in which the public criticized officials were common.\(^{85}\)

The Five-Anti campaign, lasting from 1952 to 1953, was of much greater scale than the Three-Anti campaign, and was more violent. Focusing on the corruption of urban life, it particularly targeted the bourgeoisie and privately owned businesses.\(^{86}\) Over 450,000 businesses were investigated, with many businessmen, perhaps even a third of them, accused of tax evasion and other forms of fraud. With a vague definition of “counterrevolutionary” to work with, local party cadres had a great deal of independence in jailing or executing members of the population. In all, the number executed during these three campaigns is probably approximately 1 million, with about 2.5 million sent to reeducation camps, and approximately 700,000 suicides.\(^{87}\) These campaigns fall under two of the categories of the use of terror in the Mobilization Stage in the

model, that of the elimination of rival ideological groups as part of the control function and as acts of coercion forcing adherence to the new system as part of the transformation function, particularly the emphasis on reeducation and thought reform, which attempted to coerce ideological opponents to agree to the state’s official policies.

The first occurrence of a true purge high in the ranks of Chinese Communists occurred in 1953, with the elimination of the leader of the Communist party and state in Manchuria, Gao Gang, along with others allied with him. Accused of attempting to advance his position within the party at the expense of other leaders, Gao Gang was excoriated by Mao and condemned for threatening party unity. Following this, he was accused of running Manchuria essentially independently, without following the orders of the central leadership, and of having excessively close ties with the Soviets. As a result of the attack on him by the party leadership, he committed suicide, and his followers were ejected from the party. Gao Gang’s purge was accompanied by the purge of Jao Shu-shih, another major leader, who headed the party and state in the Shanghai region. This first purge was small, but it was the first of major party leaders, and it set the precedent that few were safe. This purge fits the model’s prediction of the use of terror to eliminate rival authority figures and their followers. Gao Gang and Jao Shu-Shih were probably seen as political threats because they acted semi-autonomously in their respective regions.

Shortly after the Gao Gang incident, a more widespread purge began, the Sufan Campaign, or the Campaign to Wipe Out Hidden Revolutionaries, lasting from March 1955 to early 1956. In an effort both to remove the followers of Gao Gang and Jao Shu-shih and to regain centralized control over the expanding government bureaucracy, hundreds of thousands of party members deemed suspect were investigated, with tens of thousands sent to labor camps.

89 Meisner. *Mao’s China.* p. 133.
However, many of these were released months later with apologies for being unfairly accused. Additionally, intellectuals became a target for the purge, resulting in the arrests of many who, while Communist thinkers, opposed the official party line, such as the prominent revolutionary theorist Hu Feng. Unfortunately there is no precise number for those affected by the purge, with sources varying wildly, from 81,000 arrests to 770,000 deaths, and little way to determine which numbers are correct. The purge of party members who were not ideologically sound falls in line with the control function of the model, particularly the removal of those with rival ideological backgrounds, as even though they might not have been truly ideologically opposed to the party leadership, that was the motivation behind the purge, and excesses or mistakes do not alter the intent. More accurately, the purge of intellectuals who did not follow the party line also falls into the same category of the elimination of ideological opponents, supporting the model.

Greatly concerned with the conservative and bureaucratic nature the Communist Party was beginning to assume, Mao announced in 1956 the beginning of the Hundred Flowers campaign, an intellectual opening that allowed people to discuss issues relatively freely, and invited criticism of the party from intellectuals. The campaign started out slowly, but gained momentum rapidly, and soon the party was being criticized on every level, from its past treatment of dissenting intellectuals to its lack of adherence to its socialist roots.

Faced with a great deal of criticism, much of it bordering on anti-Communist sentiment, the voice of the Communist Party in the press, the *People’s Daily*, announced the end of the campaign on June 8, 1957, saying that right wingers were using their freedoms wrongly, and that

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the continued criticism of the Communist Party was dangerous. This marked the turning point from the Hundred Flowers Campaign to the Anti-Rightist campaign, in which dissidents who had previously spoken out were rooted out of society and the party and punished.95

The anti-rightist campaign lasted until 1959, and targeted any who had previously criticized the ruling regime. In a peculiar twist, it was often those who had been most vague and tame in their critiques that endured the most scrutiny and punishment, as those who were suspicious of the Hundred Flowers Campaign and saw themselves as most vulnerable to retaliation by the state criticized less, but were still seen as enemies of the state. The targets of the anti-rightist campaign fall into a number of categories, but notably the students who had criticized the government were largely left alone and seen as being influenced by their professors. Leaders of democratic parties were denounced and forced to confess to forming a large conspiracy, but these leaders tended to be faced with thought reform, not death. Additionally, writers and artists who criticized the party were particularly targeted, and were sent to work camps and had their works banned.96 The anti-rightist campaign used the response to the Hundred Flowers campaign and the attack on rightists as a pretense to purge urban state and bureaucratic offices of conservative officers and party members. This was the largest group focused on, with over one million purged over the course of the campaign and replaced by Maoists.97 Overall, 5% of every labor group was purged, and between 400,000 and 700,000 members of the Communist party and intellectuals were arrested and sent to prisons and work camps for 20-year sentences.98

Although the Hundred Flowers campaign seems to be contradictory to the model’s representation of the Mobilization stage as a time in which the regime attempts to remove competing viewpoints, the ensuing persecution in the Anti-Rightist campaign of those who had taken part in the criticism makes a reexamination of the Hundred Flowers campaign necessary, and makes the ultimate result of this period of time seem to support the model. Though it is unclear whether the Hundred Flowers campaign reflected a genuine interest in criticism or a plot to make those who resisted the state make themselves known, the end result was one of persecution of dissenters, falling in line with the removal of ideological opponents, an aspect of the control function of the Mobilization stage.

Beginning in 1957, the Great Leap Forward was a campaign intended to transform the Chinese economy, dramatically increasing both industrial and agricultural production. A major part of this transformative campaign was the collectivization of rural farms into large communes. Already nominally collectivized, most peasants had been living in small groups that closely resembled the previous village setup, but the new program meant hundreds of thousands of people were now forced into huge communes, some reaching over 100,000 people.\(^99\)

Organized in the new communes, peasants not only worked on farming, but were often pushed into working on public projects such as irrigation systems, on a massive scale.\(^100\) This construction was costly in lives, as the intense nature of the work led to many deaths, such as those of 10,000 out of 60,000 workers on a site in Henan. The allocation of so much of the rural labor force to these projects was also costly when it came to the harvest, as the removal of many workers needed to farm contributed, along with poor crop management, to a devastating

famine.¹⁰¹ Millions died, but the leadership, convinced that food shortages were a result of the hoarding of food, began to raid homes and arrest peasants, imprisoning and executing thousands. Estimates range between 20 and 45 million deaths from this famine, with 2 to 3 million dead as a result of torture and execution by the authorities for various violations.¹⁰² All this occurred while the Chinese state was exporting grain, with net exports of 4.2 million tons in 1959, and refusing aid from the United States for political reasons.¹⁰³

The forced collectivization of peasant farms, combined with the conscription into labor groups for public projects fall into the category of acts of coercion forcing adherence to the new system, one of the indicators in support of the model. Additionally, although the famine that claimed millions of lives was not completely a direct example of terror, the inaction and harsh policies of the state contributed greatly to the famine, and therefore the policies toward punishments of peasants during this period also fall into the category of acts of coercion forcing adherence to the system of total control by the state.

As a result of its disastrous outcome, following the Great Leap Forward, Mao lost much of his power within the government, but still retained a dedicated following among the people, particularly the youth. Beginning in 1966, the young followers of Mao formed Red Guard cadres and began persecuting those they found to be disloyal and bad Communists, essentially anyone who was not enthusiastically Maoist. The terror committed by the Red Guards took place in an unclear area between independent action and state direction. Although their persecution of those who were seen as not loyal Communists was almost never organized by the government, many actions were taken to support and encourage them, such as Mao’s order for the police not to stop

Red Guard units from operating or killing people, or the closing of schools for six months to allow Red Guard units dominated by children free rein. The Red Guards operated mainly in urban areas, and focused their attacks on intellectuals, including teachers, scientists, writers, and “blacks,” those accused of having been against the Communist regime at some time in the past, as well as their families. Those targeted would often have their homes raided, with all their belongings taken from them and any attempt to resist met with beatings or death. Additionally, government agencies were purged by secret police dressed as Red Guards, or Red Guards themselves, with 3 to 4 million of the 18 million party cadres arrested and jailed. These attacks often involved massive campaigns of public humiliation, forcing the accused to spend hours being yelled at and beaten by a crowd, leading many to die of their wounds or commit suicide.

While the Red Guard had free rein for months, and in many cities and regions succeeded in overthrowing the previous party command structure, over time the Communist leadership realized that they needed to regain control, and the army began to be used to break up radical groups. Faced with many groups vying for power, the army often chose to back the more conservative groups, often the old party cadre, in the name of maintaining order, and therefore often forcibly removed radical groups from power. In September, 1967, the army was ordered to restore order, and independent citizens were ordered to turn in their weapons and follow the direction of the military. While some followed this order, many radicals refused to give up their struggle and instead resisted the military’s attempt to regain control, leading to many violent clashes and a brutal response by the army, which finally ended resistance in 1968. In fact,

more Chinese were killed during the military’s campaign to regain control than died from the excesses of the Red Guards.\footnote{Meisner. \textit{Mao’s China}. p. 351.}

Following the disbanding of the Red Guards and the reassertion of power by the central party apparatus, 5.4 million people were forcibly sent to work in the country, and 3 million party members who had been removed from their positions were sent to rehabilitation camps, which were essentially prisons.\footnote{Courtois and Kramer, \textit{The Black Book}. p. 534.} In all, from executions, beatings, military clashes, suicide, or other means, the Cultural Revolution claimed between 400,000 and 1 million lives.\footnote{Courtois and Kramer, \textit{The Black Book}. p. 513.} The use of violence and terror by the Red Guards against members of the intellectual community and allegedly corrupted party members falls in line with the Mobilization Stage identified by the Dallin/Breslauer model which predicts the elimination of those with rival ideological backgrounds. Those targeted were seen as ideological enemies of the Maoist regime. Additionally, once the Red Guards and radicals had served their purpose, the military’s violent repression and subsequent deportation of millions to work in the countryside adheres to another purpose of terror in the Mobilization stage, coercion forcing adherence to the Communist system. However in this case the system was not a new system being built but a return to the previous, overturned governing structure, so it is not completely in line with the model. Overall, though the processes that took place during the Cultural Revolution largely fall in line with what is predicted in the Mobilization Stage, supporting the model.
Similarities and Differences in Mobilization Stages

The similarities between the experiences of the Soviet and Chinese states through the mobilization stage are many, although there are also a few key differences in their use of terror. The Soviet Union and China both undertook campaigns of collectivization, and both enacted some high-level purges of the party in the early years of the Mobilization stage, as the purge of Trotskyites and political opponents of Stalin can roughly be compared to the Gao Gang affair. Both states pursued collectivization of their agriculture, although the Soviet situation required much more violence than the Chinese collectivization process, as the Chinese Communists had considerable influence and support within the peasantry, while the Soviets derived most of their support from urban workers. In a sense, the supporting groups and enemies for the Soviets and Chinese were reversed, as the Chinese relied on the peasants and saw urban dwellers as inherently corrupt, while the Soviets were brought to power by urban workers and deeply distrusted the peasants. Both states also suffered massive famines that killed millions, largely as a result of the policies of the state, rather than the weather conditions or a poor harvest.

The primary differences between the two examples can be found in the comparison of the major campaigns of terror for each, the Great Purge in the Soviet Union and the Cultural Revolution in China. Though they both created a widespread sense of fear in the population, they came about in very different ways, that reveal much about the leadership of the two states. The Great Purge was a much more centralized campaign, directed and carried out by the central Communist authority, while the Cultural Revolution, though directed by Mao, was largely independently carried out by Red Guards. This demonstrates both the differences in the level of
control in the two states, as Mao enjoyed much less authority in China than Stalin did in the Soviet Union.

Both cases provide a large amount of support for the model, as nearly every major incident of terror falls neatly into the classifications held up by the model. Although the Chinese example contains a few more ambiguous cases that could be subjectively interpreted, such as the true nature of the Hundred Flowers campaign or the culpability of the regime in the excesses of the Red Guards, overall the model’s description of the Mobilization Stage holds true.
The Post-Mobilization Stage in the Soviet Union

The Post-Mobilization Stage is less clear-cut than the other two stages. It has a specific beginning point, the death of Stalin, which set into motion numerous reforms, but there is no certain endpoint for the stage, and the transition from the Mobilization to the Post-Mobilization stage is ambiguous at times. Although the death of Stalin in March, 1953, effectively marked the beginning of the end of the widespread use of terror that had been a major part of his regime, the use of violence and intimidation did not end with Stalin’s rule. The period the Soviet Union spent under Brezhnev was characterized by an undoing of some of the liberalization present in the Khrushchev era. However, use of terror in the Soviet Union was markedly different after Stalin’s rule, and the validity of the Post-Mobilization Stage of the model can be tested. The model is supported by the lessening of the use of terror as a tool of the state. Any instances where the use of terror is condemned and removed as a commonly used tool of the Communist regime supports the model, and uses of terror in this time period work against the model.

The process of de-Stalinization and a movement away from the terror that was a staple of his time in power began nearly immediately after he died in 1953, but only emerged in full force in February, 1956. The change was signaled by Khrushchev’s speech to the Twentieth Party Congress, On the Cult of Personality and Its Consequences, which denounced Stalin and his reign of terror. This marked a thaw in the policies of the Soviet Union, allowing the country to begin to discuss the crimes that the state had committed. Notably, following this speech, the
people were permitted to discuss and criticize what had happened under Stalin, one of the first instances in the Soviet Union in which public criticism of the state would not result in arrest.\textsuperscript{113}

The process of the lessening of the use of terror was not an immediate one, and in fact a number of steps designed to move away from the terror of the Stalin period employed violence, but the important distinction is that there was no coercion or force on a mass scale, so it does not completely meet the definition of terror used for this thesis. For instance, Lavrenty Beria, leader of the NKVD and responsible for the arrests, deportations, and deaths of hundreds of thousands, was himself arrested and executed three months after Stalin’s death.\textsuperscript{114} Following Khrushchev’s Secret Speech, movement towards reform was made, but the conflict between reformers and conservatives made it a slow and inconsistent process. Some of the new Party leader’s opponents, Molotov, Malenkov, and Kaganovich, were removed from the Central Committee, but in contrast with comparable previous leadership purges under Stalin, they were not arrested or executed, but simply assigned to lower level positions.\textsuperscript{115} The condemnation of Stalin and his uses of terror, and the punishment of those associated with his actions serves to support the model, as the speech and subsequent reforms follow in line with its predictions of the condemnation of the use of terror, and the punishment of those who were instrumental in it and still supported it could also be seen as condemnations of a sort.

In the wake of Stalin’s death, the necessity of the gulags and the justice of the sentences of most who had been imprisoned began to be questioned, and over the course of the next three years the majority of those living in the gulags were released. Beginning with an amnesty decree on March 27, 1953, followed by a number of edicts by the Supreme Soviet, the population of the

\textsuperscript{114} Curtis. \textit{Russia: A Country Study}.
\textsuperscript{115} Curtis. \textit{Russia: A Country Study}. 
gulags decreased by almost 1.5 million, from 2,246,914 on April 1, 1953 to 781,630 on January 1, 1956.\textsuperscript{116} Overall, in the five years following Stalin’s death, about 4 million people were released from forced labor camps.\textsuperscript{117} Additionally, seven years after his death, the rehabilitation of over 700,000 people once convicted of counter-revolutionary crimes was complete, and as many as 30,000 of them had their party membership restored.\textsuperscript{118}

This massive release of prisoners follows in line with the model’s predictions for the Post-Mobilization Stage, the removal of the use of terror as a tool of the state, and an attempt to undo the effects of previous instances of terror, supporting the model. However, as the prison populations were released, crime in the Soviet Union spiked dramatically, sparking a backlash against those who had been released. At its lowest in 1960, the prison population grew as certain reforms were undone, resulting in a prison population back at nearly a million by 1962.\textsuperscript{119} While this backsliding does seem to indicated that the model is not quite as strong in its predictions of the undoing of terror in this instance, the reversal of these reforms and the new arrests do not easily fall under the classification of terror, as they appear to serve a standard law and order function.

Although the contrast between the Soviet Union under Stalin and the Soviet Union under Khrushchev and later leaders is stark, this does not mean terror was no longer used at all by the Soviet government. Though this thesis discusses domestic uses of terror, it is important to note the use of force to suppress protests and resistance in Hungary, Khazakhstan, and other Communist states in the post-Stalin era that the Soviet Union had a great deal of control over. These examples will not be used to support or criticize the model, but they deserve mention.

\textsuperscript{117} Dobson. \textit{Khrushchev’s Cold Summer}. p. 109.
\textsuperscript{118} Dobson. \textit{Khrushchev’s Cold Summer}. p. 199.
\textsuperscript{119} Dobson. \textit{Khrushchev’s Cold Summer}. p. 208.
Additionally, with Khrushchev’s ousting and the rise of Brezhnev, the Soviet Union became less open, although not returning to the same level of repression as the Stalin years. This relapse somewhat limits the reliance of the model, but the model does accept that the process is subject to backsliding, so it does not seem to completely disprove it.
The Post-Mobilization Stage in Communist China

The Post-Mobilization Stage in China began with the death of Mao in 1976 and continued throughout the reforms which followed, particularly those under Deng Xiaoping. The examination of the Chinese case for a Post-Mobilization stage is interesting, as the book containing the model being tested was published before China entered this stage, so the authors did not have China as a reference point for the creation of the model, meaning that the adherence of the Chinese case to the model would show it to be more generally accurate, and not simply tailored to the cases already existing. The model is supported by the lessening of the use of terror as a tool of the state. Any instances where the use of terror is condemned and removed from use as a common tool of the Communist government supports the model, and uses of terror in this time period work against the model.

The Post-Mobilization stage can be seen as distinctly beginning with the arrest of the Gang of Four, four members of the Chinese Politburo who were closely aligned with Mao and were seen as being responsible for much of the excesses of the Cultural Revolution. Their arrest and the subsequent political rise of Deng Xiaoping, the target of many previous purges and attacks, meant a serious movement away from the previous regime, especially in the ability to criticize Mao and his policies.\(^{120}\) The Cultural Revolution was now no longer held to be a period of great success, but was condemned, and those responsible for it were also condemned, falling in line with the condemnation of previous instances of terror in the Post-Mobilization Stage.

As Deng Xiaoping solidified his position of power, he moved forward with a number of reforms, mostly economic, but many political, and many attempting to right the past wrongs the

state had committed. In June 1978, 100,000 political prisoners were released, along with many others who had been sent to work camps or prisons for “rehabilitation”. The consolidation of power was not a completely non-coercive process, however, as some critics of Deng were arrested and sent to labor camps, but the scale was much smaller than that of any previous campaigns or purges by the government.

Once in power, Deng allowed the process of rehabilitation to continue, enabling 2/3 of those who had been sent to work in the countryside to return home, rehabilitating hundreds of thousands, often with apologies and honors, putting more legal rights into the new constitution, and importantly, introducing Communist China’s first penal code, establishing a system of law and procedure to regulate punishments instead of the randomness and arbitrariness that had characterized the use of government coercion previously. The new penal system dramatically changed the makeup of China’s prisons, with only .5% of new prisoners in 1982 political prisoners, and by 1986 the prison population had fallen to .5% of the total population, half of the prison population of 1976. This turn away from the use of terror as a means of control and towards a more systematic legal code follows the model’s prediction of a movement away from the use of terror in the Post-Mobilization stage, supporting the model.

Although great strides away from the use of terror as an everyday method of control have been taken, particularly towards the establishment of a just legal code, the transition away from the use of violence and intimidation in China has not been a consistent one. The Tiananmen Square massacre in 1989, in which the military violently dispersed a sit in of students and other protestors, resulted in over 1000 dead and 10,000 injured in Beijing alone, while hundreds of

executions outside the city took place against other dissenters following the incident, and 40,000 people were arrested. Additionally, there were still as many as 100,000 political prisoners jailed in China in 1991, though the classification of their imprisonment as terror is problematic, due to the use of a legal code. These examples of terror during the Post-Mobilization stage seem to weaken the applicability of the model. Although not on the same scale as in Mao’s time, they are present in significant numbers and scope to suggest the persistence of the arbitrary use of severe coercion, especially the Tiananmen Square incident.

Arbitrary governmental coercion still occurs, particularly in the cases of the confiscation of lands of peasants and the harsh treatment of journalists who criticize the government. Torture and abuse of those in prisons is common, as is religious repression, particularly in Tibet, and forced resettlement. Again, the presence of a legal code means that the true arbitrariness of these actions is not clear, so these instance may not necessarily be classifiable as terror, but they show the movement away from arbitrary government coercion has yet to be completed. In all, the Post-Mobilization experience of the People’s Republic of China seems to show the movement away from terror as a general policy outlined within the model, with the exception of the Tiananmen Square incident. Though there are still some citizens victimized within China, the model predicts the movement away from terror as a general policy, not the complete removal of terror, so a few cases does not disprove it.

Similarities and Differences in the Post-Mobilization Stage

As in the Mobilization Stage, the examples of the Soviet Union and China are alike in many ways. For one, in both countries the Post-Mobilization Stage began with the death of a powerful dictator, Stalin and Mao. This seems to suggest that the terror that had occurred during the Mobilization Stage was partly a result of their own personal agenda, but it might also suggest that the turn away from the use of terror might have been used as a political tool by those attempting to gain power in the vacuum left by their demise, and the absence of the leader was the first time the condemnation of the use of terror could be politically advantageous. This would explain why the two men who led their countries at the beginning of their Post-Mobilization Stages, Khrushchev and Deng Xiaoping, succeeded in gaining power, as much of their political authority came from their delegitimization of the followers of Stalin and Mao, who had been their main political opponents.

Another similarity in the Post-Mobilization Stages of the Soviet Union and the People’s Republic of China is the inconsistent nature of reform. Although a great number of improvements had taken place, the use of terror, even in some major, dramatic events, continued, such as the Tiananmen Square massacre. Along with these major events, smaller-scale aspects of the regime’s use of terror continued, from the holding of political prisoners in China to the Brezhnev-era return to praising Stalin in the Soviet Union. Both cases followed much of the same path in the movement away from the use of terror, with the release of previous political prisoners and an increased focus on the rule of law standing out as major points of similarity. The process was not a linear one, but the overall arc of both cases shows a significant movement away from the use of terror in the Post-Mobilization Stages, supporting the model.
Conclusion

After examining all the major uses of terror throughout the histories of the Soviet Union and the People’s Republic of China and analyzing them through the lens of Dallin and Breslauer’s model, the model seems to be accurate for the most part, but it does have some real problems. The use of terror in both states in both the Takeover Stage and the Mobilization Stage fits nearly perfectly with the functions of terror specified in the model. The problem is that many of the indicators for the Takeover and Mobilization Stages are too broad to serve as real indicators of a specific stage. With the overlapping nature of some of the functions of the two stages, events such as dekulakization and the Great Famine could conceivably be classified as parts of both stages. Therefore, the model would be more accurate if it removed some of the functions of the Takeover and Mobilization Stages that are essentially the same, and stated that the elimination of opponents or potential opponents from rival ideological or cultural groups occurs in both stages. Though this is not very specific it is better than trying to classify events as different when they are actually very similar. That being said, aside from the problem of a lack of distinction between them in some cases, the model’s descriptions of the Takeover and Mobilization Stages both appear to be accurate.

Additionally, the cases seem to adhere somewhat to the predicted features of the Post-Mobilization Stage, but there are some problems there. Though the model does allow for some uses of terror during the adjustment into the Post-Mobilization Stage, it downplays the scale and importance that terror would continue to have, and when looking at events such as the Chinese regime’s actions in Tiananmen Square in 1989, the use of terror in Communist states remains a very real factor for longer than the model predicts. Despite this, there is a very real and readily
apparent movement away from the use of terror as a common tool of the state, and although it is not eliminated entirely, the difference between the use of terror in the Soviet Union and China under Stalin and Mao and after is dramatic enough to validate the central concept of the Post-Mobilization Stage. With two stages extremely well supported, if a little too similar, and one stage partially supported, the model does seem to hold up as an accurate depiction of the evolution of the role of terror as a tool of Communist regimes.
Bibliography


