Stalin And Mao Essay, Research Paper

History has shown that strong individuals and revolutionary ideas can have a major impact on a country. Leaders are often driven by what they perceive as a desire to create a more perfect country. Frequently their egos and methods sway them from the realization of the ideals they set out to achieve. Every country has encountered a noteworthy leader at one point or another. Some countries realize this, and take advantage of the fact, while others let him or her pass slip away. A great leader has an impact on a country, an impact that lasts, one that can be looked upon as an example for future generations. Mao Zedong, of China, and Joseph Stalin, of the Soviet Union were great leaders of their time. Mao and Stalin had similar objectives, means, and influences on their country.

Both Mao and Stalin had similar ideas at the base of their pyramid of goals. Both leaders believed that Communism was the best system for a their countries. Mao said ?If you want to know the taste of a pear, you must change the pear by eating it yourself. . . . If you want to know the theory and methods of revolution, you must take part in revolution. All genuine knowledge originates in direct experience.? Mao believed that some ideas may work better in one country, and not at all in another. By taking a bite out of the pear, you are changing the pear itself. By changing how you achieve your goals, you change the final product. Mao had many different plans to help China recover. One of the most widely know plans was the ?Great Leap Forward.? Mao encouraged people to work longer hours and even do work at home. This new plan called for the formation of large units called communes which incorporated agriculture and industry and were supposed to be self sufficient. This concept changed Mao?s original ?play? on Marxist Communism. Mao believed that reforms, such as the ?Agrarian Reform?; Campaigns such as the ?Hundred Flowers Campaign?; and plans such as the ?First Five Year Plan? would help Communism rise in China. In 1966 Mao proclaimed a Cultural Revolution with two goals. The first was to strengthen his leadership position, and the second was to strengthen the Communist doctrine and restore the revolutionary spirit. He formed the Red Guards, a group of people dedicated strictly to Mao. Each Red Guard carried a copy of The Quotation of Mao Zedong, known as the little red book. Both Stalin and Mao had the objective to create a communist society for the good of the people These goals were corrupted by using total control, or a Totalitarian government as a means to achieve Communism.

Stalin also created plans and campaigns to achieve Communism. Stalin was quoted saying ?Comrades! We must abolish the cult of the individual decisively, once and for all.? Stalin believed that a person?s individuality should be abolished. Similar to the way Mao grouped workers together in communes during the ?Great Leap Forward,? Stalin also implemented many five year plans. He did this in a successful attempt to industrialize the Soviet Union. After the industrialization of the Soviet Union, Stalin went more towards a Totalitarianism system of government. Under the Totalitarianism government Stalin could carry out his objectives through repression, force and absolute rule. It has been proven time after time, that a person can not reach their goals unless they have the proper means. In many instances both leaders have been quoted saying that pure communism can not be reached without the aid of violence and that once pure communism is reached it is not hard to dominate other countries and defeat the enemy. As an example Chinese leader Mao was quoted saying ?Communism is not love. Communism is a hammer which we use to crush the enemy.? Mao is saying that in addition to Communism working for the commonwealth of society, Communism is working to defeat the enemy and therefore give more power to the country. Mao came to believe that defeating the enemy has a higher importance than the well being of the citizens. In China, after the KMT split with the CCP, many battles took place, some in which Mao led a small peasant army against the KMT. Similarly Stalin was quoted as saying ?To choose one?s victims, to prepare one?s plan minutely, to slake an implacable vengeance, and then to go to bed . . . there is nothing sweeter in the world.? Stalin is saying that one of the greatest advantages in communism is not the benefit to the citizens, but the power that comes from it. There were many instances of this during each ruler?s reign of power. Such an example in the Soviet Union was the Red Army. Before Stalin came into power he was a Political Commissar in the Red army. The Red Army first saw action in the Russian Civil War against the counterrevolutionary White Russians, who were opposed to Communism. Also During the Russian Revolution, the Red Army assumed the responsibility of maintaining civil order in the city of Petrograd after mobs of angry workers looted and burned police stations. Red Army officers enforced the will of the Petrograd Soviet, or council of Workers? Deputies. After A leader has set his/her goals, and has had the means to carry them trough can only wait and witness the outcome and the influence they had on their country.

Joseph Stalin and Mao Zedong?s leadership had a long term negative effect on their countries. Ultimately, a leader does not effect only those in his/her lifetime, but generations thereafter. The true evaluation of a leader?s impact is the leadership of the generations that follow him. Mao?s Cultural Revolution achieved only one of his goals. Although the Cultural Revolution firmly restored Mao?s positron of power it severely damaged China?s economy. It damaged education, industry and agriculture and set back China?s development. China was perceived as a nation insensitive to its own people. The country was divided into Radicals who supported Mao, his wife Jiang Qing, and their allies and the moderates led by Zhou Enlai. Ultimately all of Mao?s dreams for advancement for China and the Chinese people were lost to his need to maintain his own power. In the USSR Stalin also left a negative legacy. His policies did help to transform the USSR into an industrialized nation and strengthened the Soviet military presence. As in China many lives were lost to their leaders ideals. Stalin?s establishment of soviet control in Eastern Europe and his distrust of the west helped lead to the cold war.

Stalin and Mao were inspired by the ideals of Karl Marx. They led Communist revolutions to create a new classless society for their countries. They championed the cause of the worker and the development of human potential. In reality a few influential government leaders in each country held all the power. No real power was ever given to the people. Rather than help develop their countries? people, the governments of Mao and Stalin controlled the people through education, control of the media, the arts, and free speech. They used these controls and the violence of a police state to corrupt the ideals of Communism and create a Totalitarian government. Every leader has an impact on their country, whether it is positive or negative, from a great leader or from the worst. They will always be remembered for what they did or didn?t do in their country. Mao said ?Classes struggle, some classes triumph, others are eliminated. Such is history; such is the history of civilization for thousands of years.? This statement successfully sums up almost every country in history. It is not a good thing, and we must prevent it from happening again. The only way this can be achieved is if we learn from our past. Teaching history is one of the most important resources we have so that the future leaders of the world do not make the same mistakes as their predecessors.